

8

LETTERS

TO AND FROM

THE COUNTESS DU BARRY,

The last Mistress of LEWIS XV. of France;

CONTAINING

Her Correspondence with the PRINCES OF THE BLOOD,
MINISTERS OF STATE, and Others:

INCLUDING

The HISTORY of that FAVOURITE,

AND

Several curious ANECDOTES of the Court of VERSAILLES
during the last six Years of that Reign.

WITH

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

Translated from the FRENCH.

LONDON;

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M.DCC.LXXIX.

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ADVERTISMENT.

THE following Letters, according to the French Editor, were all that could be procured after the most diligent enquiry for Madame Du Barry's correspondence to the time of her exile. Such as have been written by her since, it seems, are entirely on the subject of her domestic concerns, and therefore can but little interest the Reader.

These Letters, with the assistance of the explanatory Notes, form a compleat history of this Female-Favourite, as far as it can at all excite curiosity: The life of a Recluse in a Convent, is of too uniform a nature to leave room to expect anecdotes, that may reward the pains of enquiring after them, as the history of one day, divided betwixt the stated exercise of religious duties, and the settled hours of recreation and refreshment, may serve for that of whole years.

The Translator for himself begs leave to add, that he has performed his task with fidelity, and, he hopes, not without some degree of elegance. At the same time that he has followed the Original with an exactness which shall not disappoint, he has endeav-

endeavoured to make his Letter-writers express themselves with an ease that shall not disgust his Readers. A celebrated writer has observed, that Translators are the pests of our literature; that they make frequent invasions on our idiom, and may in time reduce our language under the yoke of foreign phrases, and forms of speech; but in reality, little is to be apprehended from Translations which appear in the garb of strangers, and which will for that reason become neglected, and at length forced to give place to such as present themselves in a more familiar dress.

L E T T E R S

T O A N D F R O M

THE COUNTESS DU BARRY.

L E T T E R I.

To Monsieur BILLARD DU * MONCEAU.

Convent of St. Aure, June 10, 1758.

Dearest Godfather and Sir,

I WRITE you these lines to do myself the honour of enquiring after your health, and at the

* Madame Du Barry is the daughter of Gomart de Vaubernier, an exciseman at Vaucouleurs; at which place she was born in 1744. Mr. Billard du Monceau, who had a public office, happened to be there at the time of her birth, and lodged with the collector of excise. The collector's wife asked him to stand godfather with her to Vaubernier's child, which he did. She was named Maria Jane. After the death of her father, her mother, who was left without the least provision, came to Paris with her daughter, in order to place herself in some family, as a cook, or housekeeper. Her first application was to Du Monceau, to whom she presented his god-daughter. He made

2 LETTERS TO AND FROM

the same time to inform you that what you have heard concerning me (you will pardon me, sir,) is intirely false. The Governess has told you that I read bad books, and that I made the other boarders read them. It is no such thing; it was Mademoiselle Reville who had them from her cousin, and shewed them to us; but I would not read them, for I said it was not pretty to read such books. At last I did read them, because all my companions had done so, and insisted upon my doing the same. This, my dear god-father, is the whole truth of the matter. As to the bad picture that was found torn to pieces, I can assure you I did not tear it, nor can I tell which of the boarders did. I pray to the Lord to preserve your health and life, and beg to see you when you can come here. I look upon you as my father, and love you as much. I am, with all possible respect,

Dearest Godfather and Sir,

Your, &c.

MANON VAUBERNIER.

the mother a present, and placed the daughter in the convent of St. Aure, which was under the direction of the Abbé Grisel, the confessor of M. Billard, cashier of the posts, the nephew of Du Monceau. It should seem that the god-daughter did not behave very well, since the god-father received frequent complaints of her ill-conduct.

LETTER II.

From the Abbé DE * BONNAC.

Vitri, April 5th, 1759.

AND so, my little queen, you are at Paris, and I am told are to be here this evening; but as I should be glad to see you in private, that † Marcieu may not break in upon us as he commonly does here, I send my valet de chambre to you to beg you would put off coming 'till to-morrow. I shall be at Paris this evening, and as soon as I arrive shall send Dumont to you. I rejoice to find you are at liberty. Besides the pleasure I shall enjoy in your company, I have a thousand things to say to you, which I flatter myself you will not dislike to hear. It will be your fault if you are not happy. All that I require of you is to be more reserved, and to have that caution which is necessary with one in my station. Leave the rest to me. I shall think the time long 'till I see my dear little Manon, whom I love above all things. I shall not stay long after this letter.

* Madame Du Barry had now left the convent. Her mother was cook in a family who lived in the country, and had her daughter with her. M. Du Monceau continued his kindness to them, and allowed them a louis d'or every month.

† M. de Marcieu had the rank of colonel in the army, and was frequently at the house where the Abbé visited at Vitri, and where the mother and daughter lived. It seems he had a sort of passion for Mademoiselle Vaubernier.

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LETTER III.

To the Abbé DE BONNAC.

Paris, April 14, 1759.

SIR,

YOU made me many promises when you first began to love me. I was then your little angel, your sole delight, and you told me I could ask nothing in your power that you would refuse. I asked you for a silk gown, and you promised to give me one the first time you came here, and you have now been three times without once thinking about me. That is not well of you, sir you have deceived me. Had I known the value of the favour I did you, you should not have come off so cheaply. You know I gave you the preference to M. de Marcieu, and I am sure he would have acted more honourably than you have done. If you do not give me my gown before next Sunday, I will tell the lady all you have done; I will cry very heartily, and then she will forgive me, and scold you. Adieu, sir, I am your most humble servant,

MANON VAUBERNIER.

LET-

LETTER IV.

To her MOTHER.

My dear Mother,

I AM very happy in the family where you haye placed me. Mr. and Mrs. Labille are very good to me. There come a number of fine folks here every day, and I see so many fine things constantly, that my time never hangs heavy upon my hands. What gives me the most trouble is, that I cannot wear as good things as the other ladies in the shop. They tell me it is an exceeding good busines, so I work hard that I may get money as well as they.

There came a great * lady yesterday to buy something, and she took a deal of notice of me. I believe she has taken a liking to me, for she gave me her direction, and bid me call upon her the first opportunity. I shall go to-morrow to her house, for she certainly means me well. It has cost you a good deal of money to put me here, but it shall not be lost to you. I am per- suaded we shall be one day rich folks, and when I get money you shall never want. Adieu, my dear mother, &c.

MANON † LANCON.

* Gourdan, a famous procurer at Paris.

† When Madame Du Barry went to Labille's shop (a milliner's) she took the name of Mademoiselle Lançon.

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LETTER V.

To the Abbé DE * GONZIER.

SIR,

THE reason I did not tell you yesterday my name, and place of abode, was, because Madame Gourdan had charged me not. She would not even tell me who you were; but by good luck I found it out, for you let a letter fall out of your pocket, which I picked up, and put into mine. I herewith return it, and take the opportunity of offering my best respects, hoping that you will continue your goodness to me. You promised to take me under your protection, and I hope you will be as good as your word. I do not find myself very well to-day, but hope to be well enough to meet you at Gourdan's on Thursday. I shall tell my mistress I am going to see my mother. You promised to give me a watch, and I suppose you will bring it with you. Adieu, my dear sir; I love you as much as you deserve, and that is a great deal indeed.

LANÇON, at Labille's, a millener,
St. Honorè-street.

* Now bishop of Arras.

LET-

LETTER VI.

To Mr. BILLARD DU MONCEAU, her Godfather.

Paris, December 30th, 1760.

Dearest Godfather and Sir,

SINCE the time we met at Madame Gourdan's*, when you were so angry with me for being there, I have been under great uneasiness lest I had entirely lost your favour. I can assure you, Sir, I have never been there since; but have kept at home at M. Labille's, where I give great satisfaction. Permit me to wish you many happy years, and a continuance of every felicity. I beg to be restored to your favour, which I prize very much. I durst not go to your house for fear you should take it ill; for which reason my dear mother is the bearer of this letter. I pray God to preserve you many and many years. I am, with the greatest respect,

My dearest Godfather and Sir,

Your's, &c.

MANON VAUBERNIER.

LET-

* A very pleasant scene was played betwixt the godfather and his godchild at the house of this lady. Du Monceau used to visit the procureress pretty frequently: she had promised to introduce him to a fine young girl, who had never been shewn to the town; the gentleman was punctual, and who should this new face be but his god-daughter. Ashamed, and confounded at being seen in such a house by the girl, he scolded

S LETTERS TO AND FROM
LETTER VII.

From M. * DUVAL, Clerk in the Navy Office.

February 6th, 1761.

WHY, my dear Lançon, did you refuse making me the happiest of mankind? you assured me

Scolded her very heartily for coming there; “ but, godfather, (said the child very smartly) can there be any harm in coming where you are ? ” The godfather flew in a passion at this retort, and gave her several strokes with his cane ; the god-daughter cried out aloud, and Madame Gourdan ran in, and parted them. We must do Madame Du Barry the justice to say, that she never went to that lady’s house after this adventure.

* The circumstance which brought M. Duval acquainted with Madame Du Barry was somewhat singular. This young man was of a good figure, and had an income sufficient to enable him to dress genteelly. He lodged in Labille’s house ; Mademoiselle Lançon took a liking to him, and made the first advances. She made them in this manner. Her mistress could draw, and now and then gave the girls of the shop a lesson. Little Lançon had made some progress, and amused herself with sketching the likeness of Duval ; when she had finished her portrait, she stuck it upon Duval’s door. As soon as the young gentleman came home, he found it there, and immediately guessed it was the work of some of Labille’s young ladies, on whose heart he must have made an impression. His vanity was flattered, and he was from that moment in love with her. Which of them it was he did not know ; but no matter : he sticks the portrait up again, first writing under it, *I would fain know who drew this.* The next evening he finds another paper stuck upon it, with the figure of a young girl, and under it these words, *I drew it.* Behold him now enchanted with his good fortune ; and as soon as the shop was opened, next morning, he entered it, and reviewed all the young ladies. Lançon smiled ; she was from that moment the object of his passion, he thought only of her. In the evening he writes upon the door these words, *When can my painter come to finish my picture?* Little Lançon, when she went to bed

MADAME DU BARRY, 9

me; I told you I did the same; we had full liberty; the time, the place were all as favourable as we could have wished, and yet we enjoyed only the shadow of pleasure. By your own account you were not so reserved with that fellow Bonnac. You promised to acquaint me with your reasons, I long to know them, for I cannot guess what they can be. I did not sleep the whole night; your image was always before my eyes; I fancied I had you in bed with me; I thought I heard your voice, and that I held you in my arms; but it was no more, my dear charmer, than a dream. Give your reasons to my servant, who is the bearer of this. I wait your answer with the greatest impatience, for, believe me, I am the most passionate of lovers.

DUVAL.

bed, read them, and wrote underneath, *Your painter will come and break-fast with you to morrow at nine o'clock; leave your door open.* Duval got every thing ready against the time appointed, and took care to send his man out of the way. The door was left ajar, and in trips young Lançon They fastened themselves within; they breakfasted. The young man takes some liberties with his lover; she refuses him none except the last. He demands an explanation; she promises one the next day. It was to engage her to keep her word, that he wrote this letter.

C

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10 LETTERS TO AND FROM
LETTER VIII.

To M. DUVAL.

YES, my dear friend, I said it, and repeat it to you again, I love you very sincerely. You have told me as much; but on your part it is only a sudden spark of passion, which enjoyment will in a moment put out, and then you will think no more of me. I begin to know mankind. Attend, and I will tell you my sentiments. I am tired of working in a shop; I wish to be my own mistress; and I want to find somebody who will keep me. If I did not love you, I should endeavour to get what money I could from you; I should bid you take an apartment for me, and furnish it; but as you told me you were not rich, we may live in the same lodging, and the difference in housekeeping will be nothing at all. I shall cost you nothing but in my board and dress; and if you are agreeable; allow me only one hundred livres a month, and I will find myself in every thing. Upon this plan we may live happily together, and you will have no cause to complain of my reserve. If you love me, accept my offer; if you do not, let us seek our fortunes separately. Good day to you. I embrace you with all my heart.

LANCON.

6th of February, 1761, at night.

LET-

LETTER IX.

From M. DUVAL.

April 15th, 1761.

YOU would undoubtedly be surprized, my dear little girl, when you heard that I had left my lodgings so suddenly. Your persisting to refuse to make me completely happy, has caused me to give the preference to a lady, whom a little compliance on your part would have easily prevailed on me to sacrifice to you. You must know then, that I have made a conquest of a lady, whose rank does not a little flatter my vanity; and it is settled betwixt us, that I should come and live with her. Be assured, my charmer, that if the moments I have passed with you have not been engaging enough to have made me your constant lover, they have been so far agreeable that you may always esteem me your friend whilst I live.

DUVAL.

LETTER X.

To M. DUVAL.

16th April, 1761.

YOU inform me that you have left me for a lady distinction, some great lady without doubt,

C 2

with

with whom you are going to live. I am of opinion you gratified your own vanity in telling me this news. I know not if your heart is concerned, but I doubt it. I know that love makes no distinction of ranks; and that he divides women only into two classes, the handsome and the ugly. I know too that a young girl of sixteen is always preferable to a great fat creature of forty years of age, though she had the blood of the Bourbons in her veins. Think of this; I give you twenty-four hours to consider of it. Believe me you will never have the same offer made you twice. I would not have you think I am at a loss. I have a lover far beyond you in point of figure; he is besides younger than you are; of a better complexion;—in short; he is as handsome as an angel. Methinks I hear you cry, fye, for shame, when I tell you he is my hair-dresser. But don't you know, that great ladies of quality often prefer their footmen to their husbands? and, surely, you will not pretend to dispute their taste. Ask your's, if she considered rank or condition, when she took you? Mine has offered me marriage; but I shall not accept his offer, for I might be tempted to break my marriage-vows. If I do not chuse to marry him, he agrees to furnish me a lodging, and to spend all his earnings with me. We shall see how it answers; so long as

we

we continue to like one another, every thing will go well. Adieu; think of what I say to you. I certainly do love you at this present writing; but it will be soon over, and you will wish to have me when you are tired of your lady of quality: but all in vain; the hair-dresser will have rivalled you; you will be vexed, and I shall laugh at you.

LANÇON.

LETTER XI.

To * LAMET, residing in London.

Paris, 30th August, 1761.

WE are now, my unhappy friend, very far separated from each other, and both of us in a wretched situation! That you ruined yourself by living with me I know very well; and you know too that whilst we lived comfortably together, I refused to be kept by † M. Monoye, who agreed to discard his fat mistress, Madame Laurens. I loved you, and I fancied we should do well; but it signifies nothing to fret and

* This Lamet is the hair-dresser of whom mention is made in the last letter. It seems he lived with Madame Du Barry about four months.

† M. Monoye, a proctor in the parliament, lived with Madame Laurens upwards of twenty years. She kept a jeweller's shop in St. Honoré-street, and has a daughter by Monoye marriageable.

grieve;

14 LETTERS TO AND FROM

grieve; we must have a good heart. Do you endeavour to pick up some money in London, and I will strive to ruin some old fool or other, who shall take me into keeping; and the first of us who grows rich shall help the other. What say you to this? I must inform you that I live with my mother again, who has scarcely enough for herself; so to help out we go every evening to the Palai Royal, or the Thuilleries. Sometimes we get our 17 or 18 livres betwixt us; and sometimes less; however we make a shift to live. Still I am in hopes we shall not be forced to do this long, but shall make some good acquaintance to bring us out of this way. Adieu, my dear Lamet, love me, and let me hear from you. I am your's whilst I live.

LANCON.

LETTER XII.

To M. LA * GARDE, Master of the Requests.

Cour-neuve, 11th July, 1764.

YOU insist upon my opening my heart to you, sir, and declaring whether you are agreeable

* Father Ange Picpus passed for the brother-in-law of Madame Du Barry's mother. In the year 1762, he said Mass at the Cour-neuve on holidays and Sundays to the old Madame la Garde, the widow of an exceeding rich Farmer-General. The Father found means to introduce this

able in my eyes. It is a difficult confession to engage a woman to make; but at my time of life it is hard to dissemble. I tell you frankly that I have a regard for you, and that I find great satisfaction in your company; but there is so great a distance betwixt us, in point of birth and fortune, that such a declaration as this is a very dangerous one to make, and it may cost me many tears now that I have made it. What is your end in prosecuting your passion for me? Is it not to ruin a virtuous young person, whom after having ruined you will forsake? What is to become of her then when deserted and despised by all that know her? Ah, sir, take my advice, stifle this infant-passion in its birth. Let me be the object of your esteem only, and I shall continue to be happy. I shall always entertain the most grateful sense of the many favours which I have received from you, and the good lady your mother. I beg the continuance of them, and that you will believe me to be with the highest regard, sir, &c.

DE VAUBERNIER.

this pretended niece to the lady, and she was taken into the family as a companion. She had two sons, one a Master of the Requests, the other a Farmer General. Madame Du Barry was addressed by both, and gave them both encouragement. She loved the Master of Requests, but the other was the richest; however, she was never able to attach either of them to herself. This little intrigue was discovered by the mother, and Madame Du Barry was thereupon turned out of the family. The Master of the Requests, who had the good fortune to engage her affections, never made her any returns.

LETTER XIII.

To M. LA GARDE, Farmer-General.

Cour-neuve, 30th July, 1764.

A THOUSAND thanks, sir, for the repeater which I have just received without knowing from whom; but as there is no man living who knows how to confer favours like yourself, I immediately placed it to the score of your generosity, and I am sure I am not deceived. It is you alone can make presents in so noble a manner. I am only sorry I cannot wear it. Every body will admire it, and your mother will of course ask me how I came by it. So that I must content myself with hanging it at my bed's head, and making it strike whilst I think of the donor. It is a great satisfaction to have our benefactors always present in the mind. We shall see you here on Saturday. You promised your mother to come; and I for my part look forward to the hour of your coming with great pleasure. I am, with many acknowledgments, &c.

DE VAUBERNIER.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

To M. LA GARDE, Master of the Requests.

Cour-neuve, 11th August, 1764.

YOU found the way, sir, to introduce yourself privately into my bedchamber last Monday, and my fright was so great that I had neither power to bid you begone, nor to cry out. You got into bed—What protestations did you not make in that moment!—How soon am I undeceived! I saw with great regret the very next day that you had little regard for me. You paid every attention to that Farmer-general's lady, who though the mother of four children ridiculously pretends to beauty. You told me it was only by way of disguise. Ah, sir, I know better; there was too much of warmth; too much of passion in your looks and words, to induce me to believe you feigned. You have imposed upon my weakness; you have seduced me, and now you mean to abandon me; at least I have all the reason in the world to fear it. If it is not so, leave me no longer in doubt. Tell me sincerely what you mean to do, and restore me to life again. I expect your answer tomorrow by St. Louis. If I do not hear from you, I will go on purpose to Paris to reproach you with your treatment. In the mean time, I am, sir, &c.

DE VAUBERNIER.

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LET-

LETTER XV.

To LAMET, at London.

Cour-neuve, 12th August, 1764.

YOU are now settled, my dear Lamet, in the service of a Lord at a salary of fifty pounds sterling a year. I give you joy upon it; endeavour to keep your place 'till fortune shall prove more favourable to me. I am at present in the family of Madame La Garde, the Farmer-general's widow, as her ladyship's companion. You see I begin to creep up into high life. She has two sons; the one a gownsman; the other a financier. They both pay their addresses to me: I know not which is the most generous, but I give them both hopes, and I strive to engage one of them to take me into keeping. I pretend to great modesty in order to egg them on. Adieu, my dear friend; I shall inform you of every thing particular that relates to myself. Let me hear from you often, and believe to be whilst I live your loving friend.

LANCON DE VAUBERNIER.

LET-

LETTER XVI.

From the Count Du *BARRY.

Paris, June 20th, 1767.

I HAVE already spoken to you several times, my charming creature, concerning your coming to live with me; but I never had a proper opportunity to give you all the reasons, and shew you all the advantages that should induce you to determine upon it. I will now explain myself more clearly. You will be immediately installed sovereign of my heart; in right of which you become mistress of my house, and govern my servants, who from thenceforth will be your's. As I see all the best company, you must not be surprized to find dukes, marquisses, and even princes of the blood coming to visit at my house, or

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* Here is a long interval in Madame Du Barry's life; which we shall endeavour to fill up in brief, with all the certainty possible. She left Madame la Garde's house the end of January, 1765, and went to her mother's, who was married a second time to one Rançon, for whom Madame la Garde had procured a small place under the Farmer General. She lived with her mother very virtuously, excepting one little intrigue which she had with a peruke maker, a neighbour of her mother's, in Bourbon-street; but this affair made very little noise. There lived in the same street a Marchioness Duquesnoy, who had card-playing twice a week; to fill up the group she took young Lançon into her house, and the consequence was that her house was much resorted to. She staid there eighteen months; that is to say, all the year 1766, and the six first months of the year 1767; at which period she went to live with the Count du Barry.

20 LETTERS TO AND FROM

rather your's. They will be proud of paying their respects to you, because you will appear in the highest stile, as you will have diamonds, and every ornament befitting a woman of the first rank. I have a public assembly once a week, when you will preside, and do the honours of the house. All will become your admirers. As soon as you come to me I will give you a few preparatory lessons. With your accomplishments and graces you will not fail to be admired and adored by all that see you. Consider of what I here write, and give your consent. I shall go tomorrow to the Marchioness Dufquesnoy's when I expect your answer. I am, in the mean time, with the most inviolable attachment, my charming girl,

Your's, &c.

The COUNT DU BARRY.

LETTER XVII.

To MADAME RANÇON.

August 2d, 1767.

MY Swifs, my dear mother, told you I was not at home yesterday. It should not have happened so, if I had known of your coming. But our assembly was so late before it broke up, that I rose later than usual yesterday. Hitherto I find nothing but what is agreeable in my new establishment. The Count seems much attached

to

to me; he refuses me nothing, and is eager to prevent my wishes. Our assemblies are exceeding brilliant; and if I may judge from the attention paid to me, and the number and quality of the persons I see here, I think I should be at no loss to find a new establishment, in case the Count should take it into his head to be reconciled with her to whom I succeed; or that any other accident should break off our connexion. However, I will not trouble myself about what may happen hereafter; I hate thinking, and love to enjoy the present moment. Adieu, my dear mother, the bearer of this will give you six louis d'ors. Come to me to-morrow at eleven o'clock. Don't say you are my mother, but ask for Mademoiselle Lange, which is the name I pass by here.

V A U B E R N I E R L A N G E.

L E T T E R XVIII.

To M. RADIX de St. FOIX, Treasurer General
of the Navy.

December 6th, 1767.

I AM, my dear St. Foix, extremely unhappy. You cannot possibly imagine how ill Du Barry behaves to me. I am tired of being exposed to the brutality, and caprices of his temper. If my situation has had its sweets, they are now quite embittered by his tyranny, and I am determined

to

to break with him, and leave his house. Amongst the number of gentlemen who frequent his house, you are the person I like best, for you seem to be of an amiable disposition. I give you now a fair opportunity to prove the sincerity of all the fine things you have said to me; and the great professions you have made me. But, remember, I mean nothing but a serious connexion; on no other terms will I engage with you. You know well I have sufficient choice; but I have a regard for you, and I give you the refusal. We shall both be gainers if you consent to my proposal. You will have the entire possession of a woman who has some pretensions to beauty, and I shall have the satisfaction to be no longer within the power of a tyrant. Adieu; determine speedily, and let me have your answer. I am, if you chuse it, intirely your's,

LANGE,

LETTER XIX.

To MADAME RANÇON.

June 3d, 1768.

YOU know, my dear mother, what cause I have had here for uneasiness, and vexation. I could never have supposed that a man, for whom I felt no passion, could have gained such an ascendancy over me as the Count has done. However, since I saw

I saw you, things were carried to such a length that I had determined to leave him. I had for that purpose written to a man, who pretended love to me. But though he was of a temper to sacrifice every thing to pleasures of the moment, he had his difficulties about engaging on a settled plan, and seemed unwilling to take charge of me. I was just thinking of making another choice, when an event, as fortunate as it was unexpected, made me alter my resolution, and has attached me more than ever to Du Barry. I have not time to relate particulars. I can only say that Monsieur Le Bel, valet de chambre to his Majesty, and his confidant, is to dine here to-day. The Count spoke to him concerning me, and you may guess the occasion of his coming here, and what our designs are. We expect Le Bel every moment whilst I write. Rejoice with me, my dear mother! Though nothing is yet certain, I cannot resist entertaining the most flattering hopes. The Count has made me pass for his sister-in-law, and I am prepared to act my part accordingly. But I hear M. Le Bel's coach, and I leave off writing to receive him. Adieu, my dear mother.

VAUBERNIER LANGE.

LET-

LETTER XX.

To LAMET, in London.

Compeigne, Sept. 3d, 1768.

I HAVE just received your letter, my dear Lamet. It was next to a miracle that it found me after the alteration in my fortune. Luckily they sent it from Madame La Garde's to my mother, who conveyed it safely to me. You wish me to go to you at London, where you doubt not of my making my fortune. But all I could ever hope to get by your English Lords, would not equal what I at present enjoy, and which at one time I could never presume to expect. You little thought when we lived together, that you possessed a woman, who should one day have a title, and become the mistress of his most Christian Majesty. I think I see you now rubbing your eyes, as doubting whether you are perfectly awake whilst you read this part. It is even so, my poor Lamet; I have married (for form-sake only) a great fat fellow, a Count Du-Barry, and I am at this present moment at Compeigne, where I exercise, with all its powers, the office of the favourite Sultana. I have no need to enjoin you secrecy; you must be sensible of what consequence it is to yourself, as well as to me, not to blab. In order to secure your silence,

and

and at the same time to make you some amends for the thousand crowns I have cost you, I send you inclosed a bill for a thousand pounds sterling. It is payable to the bearer, so that when you receive the money you will have no occasion to give your name. Pray write to me no more, 'till I shall point out in what way you are to send your letters. I expect you will use discretion, and you may rely on my friendship, of which I wish to give you proofs.

The Countess Du BARRY.

LETTER XI.

From the Count Du BARRY.

Paris, 9th Sept. 1768.

YOU are now, my dear * sister, on the very pinnacle of fortune's wheel. You have nothing left to wish for. But great circumspection must

* Madame Du Barry was married the 1st of September, 1768, at St. Laurence's church, to William Du Barry, her keeper's brother. Le Bel, who introduced her to the King, told his Majesty that she was married to a person of rank, not supposing he would ever take such an extraordinary liking to her as he did. Fearing afterwards that the King would discover the imposition through some other person, and that thereupon he should be in disgrace, he threw himself at the King's feet, and told him he had been imposed upon himself, and that Madame Du Barry was neither married, nor a woman of condition. "So much the worse, replied the King, let her be married immediately, "that it may be out of my power to be guilty of a folly." Accordingly within a week the marriage was compleated.

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be used to keep you from falling. When in private with the King, be always gay, lively, and good-humoured; in public be reserved, and decent; in short, the same as you see all others of the court. I would not have you, however, carry yourself in a haughty manner; on the contrary, you should behave with the greatest politeness and affability to every one, especially to the ladies. You must needs think the women all envy you; and that there is not one of them, who at the same time that she makes you every profession of friendship, does not wish your fall. Endeavour by every possible means to make the Duke de Choiseul your friend; he is a great minister, and can do what he pleases with his master. Write to me every day. That I may give no jealousy to people in office, I shall stay at Paris, and will go very seldom to court. You are sensible you have no friend that is to be trusted besides myself; so do not fail to acquaint me with the most trifling matter that concerns yourself. I am, your brother and friend,

The Count Du BARRY.

LET.

LETTER XXII.

To the COUNT DU BARRY.

October 15th, 1768.

HIS Majesty has the same regard for me, my dear brother, as ever. He is pleased whenever court is made to me. But I am much dissatisfied with the Duke de Choiseul. He seems to have a settled dislike. The Dutchesf * his sister is in a fury whenever she sees me. When she looks at me, it is with eyes full of revenge and malice. It is impossible I can ever be upon terms with that woman. I am told the brother and sister have had songs made about me. Should I complain to the King? You ought to know what

* The Dutchesf de Grammont was the most intriguing woman belonging to the court. She was haughty and imperious, and endeavoured to rule the whole court. She had gained such ascendancy over her brother the Duke de Choiseul, that she did with him as she pleased. — "This dutchesf, says a writer of that time, was a complete court-lady, in every sense of the term; that is to say, she was determined, forward, and without shame. She considered decency of behaviour as only proper for the vulgar; and tho' she was forty years of age, she fancied she had still power to please the sovereign. Taking advantage of her rank, and the favour in which her brother stood, she intruded into the private apartments, and forced herself upon the monarch's secret pleasures. Abusing the easiness of his temper, and his passion for women, she several times participated his bed, almost against his will. As this commerce was rather the effect of teasing, and in some measure, always a violation of the king's inclinations, it was of course at an end, when Madame du Barry was brought to court." — *Inde iræ.*"

passes abroad better than I do. How am I to act? I wait your reply that I may risque nothing without your advice. I am, with many acknowledgements, my dear brother, your sister and friend,

The COUNTESS DU BARRY.

LETTER XXIII.

From the COUNT DU BARRY.

Paris, October 16th, 1768.

WE must conduct ourselves, my dear sister, with great prudence. As we cannot make the two Choiseuls our friends, we must not give them cause of offence. If after having tried to make them look on us with favourable eyes, we cannot obtain our end, we must endeavour to undermine them by slow degrees; which is no more than doing by them what they are at this moment striving to do by us. But let us be cautious not to make any open attack, 'till such time as we have a party strong enough to oppose to theirs.

I send you two lists, which you must frequently consult; one of them will shew you who are of the Choiseul party; their number you will find formidable. Be circumspect; and yet at the same time always behave to them with extraordinary politeness. Listen to no hints from them which may put you upon steps that lead to your ruin.

ruin. Strive to add some of their creatures to our party, but have no perfect reliance on them until you are well convinced they are to be trusted. The second list contains either such of whose sentiments we are doubtful, or the secret enemies of the Choiseuls. Let your behaviour to them declare your inclinations to favour them, and your readiness to use all your credit to make them your friends. I cannot repeat to you too often, to acquaint me with every difficulty you meet with, upon which you may have time to get my answer. Upon any sudden occasion you may consult with my sister.

Your rise has in a manner been brought about by accident; but I would have you be of opinion that you will not be able to maintain your ground, unless you mean implicitly to pursue the plan of conduct which I shall lay down for you; and that you will run the greatest risk in deviating from it but for a moment. Notwithstanding your dislike of artifice, and cunning, be assured, that nothing else will support you. I am not at all surprised at what you tell me of Madame de Grammont's behaviour; no woman ever yet forgave her rival. As long as I am sure that you please the king, I should wish that she carried her insolence much further; and her jealous, and vindictive spirit will certainly hurry her to such lengths as cannot fail to be as fatal

to

30 LETTERS TO AND FROM

to her as they will be favourable to us, especially as her brother is so weak as to suffer himself to be governed by her. If you come on Saturday to Paris, as you intend, I will tell you more than I have wrote here, though my letter is already of a considerable length. I am, my dear sister, your brother, and friend,

THE COUNT DU BARRY.

P. S. I forgot to tell you that I knew of your being the subject of a song before I received your letter. The Choiseuls are certainly the occasion of it; but, however, say not a word of it to the King, for if he knows nothing of it, your complaint will only serve to excite his curiosity, and that might perhaps be attended with bad consequences.

LETTER XXIV.

TO THE DUKE DE COIGNY.

Paris, January 11th, 1769.

I HAVE received your letter of excuse *, Sir, and I am willing to pardon you; I am good natured, and

* The occasion of writing this letter is pleasant enough. The Duke had known Madame du Barry under the name of Mademoiselle Lange, whilst she lived with the Count du Barry. He went to Corsica, and returned from thence some time after her marriage. Ignorant that she was the King's mistress, he enquired for her at the Count's; being informed

and not apt to bear malice; but I would have you for the future behave to pretty women in a different manner. They deserve to have respect shewn them. I wish you a good day, and am, sir, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER XXV.

From the Count DU BARRY.

17th April, 1769.

THE Choiseul party will always have the upper hand of us, my dear sister, until you are presented at court. We must obtain this honour. The Countess de * Béarn has promised

to

formed where she lived, he flies to her, and by accident meets with her at home. He accosts her very familiarly, attempts to salute her, and treats her as if she was a lady of pleasure. She assumes a serious air, and tells him she is married. "So much the better (replied the Duke) "then we shall have the pleasure of making a cuckold." Madame Du Barry finding him continue troublesome, rung her bell, and bid her servants tell the Duke's people that he was going. The Duke surprized at such a reception, went back to the Count Du Barry's and told him the story. The Count informed him of her present situation, upon which the Duke wrote to apologize for his rudeness. We have not been able to procure a sight of this letter; it was not amongst those which fell into our hands when Madame Du Barry was sent to the Convent of Pont aux Dames. The letter must needs be a curiosity.

* Madame de Béarn is sprung from a family of rank, but poor. She is the widow of a gentleman belonging to the body-guard. She came to Paris to follow a law-suit which she maintained a long time against the family of Saluces, and which might be an object to her of

300,000

to introduce you ; the critical situation of her affairs has removed every difficulty. We see plainly now the hatred and jealousy of the Choiseuls. They have not only countenanced the scandalous songs which spread about the court and city concerning you, of which they are secretly the authors, but they are more than ever attached to the Royal Family, whom they dispose against you as much as they are able, by setting you out in the blackest colours of calumny and slander. As you stand higher than ever in the King's favour, you must take a resolution to throw yourself at his feet in an agony of grief, and intreat him by all the regard he has for you, not to expose you to be scoffed at and reviled by your enemies, but to give orders for your being presented. You will add upon this occasion whatever your own feelings shall suggest to you. This is the only step that can be taken likely to answer the end. See that you do it before the end of the week ; and do it with such an emphasis of grief, that the King's heart may be touched. I beg this may be the first

300,000 livres. Having obtained a considerable provision, she was enabled to appear according to her rank, and to improve her interest. She was related to the Richelieu and d'Aiguillon families, who assisted her in gaining her cause, and afterwards prevailed upon her to present Madame Du Barry at court. The prospect of fortune, which such a step opened to her, overcame her prejudices, and made her disregard the ridicule she exposed herself to.

piece of intelligence I have from court. I am always your brother, and the truest friend you have in the world.

The Count Du BARRY.

LETTER XXVI.

From the SAME.

Paris, 19th April, 1769.

SOME words which you let drop to my sister, and which she has communicated to me, alarm me very much. You said, you were tired of having difficulties continually to surmount. What could be the worst that could happen? "Should the King discard me, I will leave the court, and with what he has already given me, "and the pension which of course he will settle "upon me, I shall have enough to appear in the world, and lead a pleasant and happy life." Ah, my dear sister, how little do you yet know of the court! Be assured what would happen to you in such a case would be confinement in a convent for the rest of your life, without being permitted to see a living creature; nay you might think yourself well off to escape being poisoned. I say no more; this is enough, I think, to frighten you. Burn this letter. I refer you to that I wrote to you the day before yesterday. Follow my last advice the moment you find an opportunity.

The Count Du BARRY.

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LETTER XXVII.

From the SAME.

Paris, 23d April, 1769.

YOU see, my dear sister, by its effects, how proper the advice was which I gave you. You are now * presented in spite of all the opposition of the adverse party. This event, by discovering the power you have over the King, must naturally intimidate our enemies, put them more on their guard, and lessen their number, whilst it makes a sensible increase in that of our friends. But do you ^{for} I continue circumspect, and watch over your own conduct with the most scrupulous attention. But chiefly have a care that the openness of your temper does not betray you into some imprudent observation, or discourse, that may afterwards be reported to prejudice you with his Majesty. If you should have committed any indiscretion of the kind, take the first opportunity of mentioning it to the King yourself, in that pleasing graceful manner which is so natural to you, and which engages all who know you. By this means, a matter, which represented by an ill-disposed person, might set his Majesty against you, will end in a laugh:

* Madame Du Barry was presented at court the 22d April, 1769, by the Countess de Béarn.

By

By being thus beforehand with your enemies, they will do themselves more harm than they can do you, because they shew that they bear you ill-will. You will think perhaps that I dwell too much upon trifles; but it often happens that things of little consequence in appearance, become in the end very serious matters. As I am under the necessity of giving you advice upon matters that may hereafter arise, as well as what actually do happen, it is possible that in the number of my observations, there may be many that you will have no occasion to follow; I shall, notwithstanding, continue the same practice, because there can be no danger in saying too much, and there may be so in not saying enough. Your situation, the constant hurry in which you live, and the natural liveliness of your temper, might betray you into acts of imprudence, against which it is absolutely necessary to warn you. Placed as I am behind the scene, I am able to form a better judgment of things than you can possibly do; and your experience must convince you that I see things clearly. I am always with the same friendship, my dear sister, your, &c.

The Count Du BARRY.

LETTER XXVIII.

To Madame LA GARDE*.

Verfailles, 30th May, 1769.

I AM sorry, madam, I was not at home when you took the trouble of coming here to pay me a visit. You have no need to ask my protection; you have it already, and you may rely upon that, as well as upon my esteem. I am entirely your's,

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER XXIX.

To the Count DE STAINVILLE.

I HAVE received your letter, sir, and I answer it with the more pleasure because I can acquaint you at the same time that his Majesty has granted you the reversion of the government of Strasbourg, which I solicited for you myself. You see by that how much I was for your having

* Old Madame La Garde, with whom Madame Du Barry lived in the year 1764, received a visit from her in the month of May, 1769; on which occasion the Countess displayed all her magnificence, with the view, no doubt, as much to mortify the pride of that silly old woman, as to gratify her own vanity. Madame La Garde returned the visit, but not finding Madame Du Barry at home, she left a note in the porter's lodge, signifying that she came to ask her protection.

it. I am much pleased with the regard you express for me. If the Duke and your sister thought as you do, we should be the best friends in the world, but I can do no more than my part towards it. I am intirely your's,

The Countess Du BARRY.

LETTER XXX.

From the KING*.

INSTEAD of staying 'till to-morrow, I would have you come this evening. I have something to tell you that will give you pleasure. Good day to you. Believe me, when I say I love you.

LEWIS.

LETTER XXXI.

To the COUNTESS DE BEARN.

2d June, 1769.

I CANNOT thank you sufficiently, madam, for all your kindness, civility, and attention to me. I should think that I abused your goodness, if I did not immediately grant you the liberty

* This letter is without date, but it must have been written in May, 1769, because what the King wanted to tell her, was, that he gave her the Chateau of Lucienne, which it appears she had got possession of in the month of June in that year, as she had put workmen into it.

you desire, and which you have so long deprived yourself of on my account. It would be laying too heavy a tax upon your friendship. You have several times expressed to me how disagreeably you passed your time in a place which you are fitter for than I am, and in which we both in a manner made our appearance together. You have business at Paris; as soon as the journey to Marly is over, I beg you would put yourself to no further inconvenience. Go to the Luxembourg-palace, and there live in retirement, and leave me to all the bustle of Versailles. But be assured I shall not forget you in your absence, but shall be, whilst I live, madam, yours, &c.

The COUNTESS DU BARRY.

LETTER XXXII.

To the Chancellor MAUPEOU.*

Mr. Chancellor,

July 6th, 1769.

I AM unacquainted with law, but I think it contrary to justice, reason, and humanity, to hang

* The occasion of Madame Du Barry's writing to the Chancellor was this. A young woman at Liancourt in Picardy, proved with child by the curate of the parish, and had the misfortune to be delivered of one still-born, without having first made the declaration prescribed by the Ordinance in such cases. She was prosecuted, and according to the letter of the law condemned to die. The sentence was

hang a poor girl delivered of a dead child, because she had concealed her pregnancy. This appears to be the case of the petitioner, as it is set forth in the petition, which I send you herewith. It seems she is to suffer because she was ignorant of the law, or broke it through a modesty so natural to her sex. I beg to refer the affair to your equity, as the unfortunate creature deserves to have mercy shewn her. I think at least her sentence ought to be changed to some other punishment. Your good sense will instruct you how you ought to act. I have the honour to be, &c.

The COUNTESS DU BARRY.

LETTER XXXIII.

From the SAME.

July 6th, 1769.

Madam, and dear * Cousin,

I AM not able to express the satisfaction you give me, in affording me an opportunity to shew

confirmed by the Parliament, and was going to be executed, when Monsieur de Mandeville, belonging to the Black Musketeers, hearing of it, interested himself in behalf of the poor girl, and went to Marly, where the court then was, with a state of the case, which he delivered to Madame du Barry, with whom he had not the least acquaintance, begging her earnestly to intercede for the girl's pardon. She complied with his request, and immediately wrote this letter, which Mandeville delivered with his own hands to the Chancellor.

* Monsieur de Maupeou, in order to ingratiate himself with the King, observing that the Du Barrys claimed alliance with the illus-

tious

shew the great regard I have for you. I shall seize every occasion which presents itself with a zeal which must convince you of the truth of those sentiments I am proud to have professed for you. I have ordered a respite of the sentence in the case concerning which you have interested yourself. As soon as the proceedings shall come to my hands, I shall grant your petitioner a pardon. It does not become me, who am at the head of magistracy, to approve of your observations upon those laws which it is my duty to see executed ; I cannot, however, my dear Cousin, help confessing that they would have been infinitely better than they are, if they had been dictated by an understanding as enlightened, and a disposition as benevolent as your own. You have given me this day a striking proof of your love of humanity, though I needed not this fresh instance of the goodness of your heart to be convinced how worthy a choice our master has made. Adieu ! my charming Cousin, be assured the least of your wishes are commands with me. I am with respect, &c.

DE MAUPEOU.

trious fami'y of the Earls of Barrymore, of the kingdom of Ireland, a family to which he was likewise related, supported their pretensions, and affected to call Madame du Barry Cousin, a circumstance which gave his Majesty sensible pleasure. The Chancellor carried this flattery very far, for going one day to pay his court to Madame Du Barry, the company with her rising, as he entered the room, out of respect to his dignity, he bad them sit still, adding, "I am only come here to "pay a family visit."

LET-

LETTER XXXIV.

From the SAME.

Marly, 8th July, 1769.

Madam, and dear Cousin,

A PARDON is granted for the young woman. What obligations do I not owe to you, since I may say upon this occasion that I have been inspired by the goddess of benevolence!

I am, &c.

DE MAUPEOU.

LETTER XXXV.

To the Count DU BARRY.

20th July, 1769.

I AM more than ever, my brother, in the King's good graces, and I stand upon the best footing at court. The Duke de Richelieu is intirely at my devotion. The Chancellor, as you know, is become my cousin, and pays me the greatest respect. The Duke de Choiseul no longer hates me as before. He accompanied me yesterday to Triel, which I am persuaded to purchase. The Duke de Richelieu advises me to be upon my guard with him. The Dutches de Grammont, in order to be out of my way, is gone upon her travels, and is supposed at this time to be in Holland. Blessings go with her!

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I wish

I wish to hear no more of her. Have you received the order for 200,000 livres upon Baujeon, which I sent you on Monday last? You make no mention of it. I shall be at Paris to-morrow. You will find me at the Opera. I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER XXXVI.

To the Countess DE MOYAN.

4th August, 1769.

I SEND you an express to acquaint you, madam, that I have obtained the pardon of Monsieur and Madame de * Louerme. His Majesty granted it me in the most obliging manner. "I am happy" (said he) "that the first favour you extort from me, should be an act of mercy." Come to-morrow and thank the King, and you will at the same time be a witness of the pleasure I feel in being able to have obliged you. I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

* The Count and Countess de Louerme were condemned to lose their heads. The Countess de Moyan was their daughter. The Chancellor refused their pardon, but stayed execution of their sentence to give his cousin an opportunity to distinguish herself.

LETTER XXXVII.

From the Marchioness de MONTMORENCY.

I HAVE, my charming Countess, a singular project in my head. You know the Duke de * Boutteville; he is not a young man now, and has in his time committed a great many follies, but he is resolved to amend his life. As the first proof of it, he has expressed his desire to marry again, and has asked me to recommend him a wife. I laughed at first at his resolution, but when I found him in earnest, I told him that the wife he ought to have should be a discreet sensible person, who might be able to give him advice; that I knew such a person, but that I could not answer if she would have him. He asked me several times who she was, and at last I informed him that it was Mademoiselle Du Barry, your sister. If I have done wrong, my dear madam, my earnest desire to become your relation must be my excuse. Speak to your sister upon the subject. If the match takes place, so much the better; if it does not, I shall not be the less your friend whilst I live.

The Marchioness de MONTMORENCY.

* The Duke de Boutteville was of one of the first families in France, but a man of bad character, and greatly involved in debt. This proposal from the Marchioness was quite political, and by it she paid court to the favourite in a particular manner.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To the SAME.

MY sister and I are highly flattered, madam, by the * alliance you propose. I have spoke of it to the King who gives his consent. Settle every thing in the best manner; we leave you to do as you like. Be assured I wish as much as you for so desirable an alliance. I embrace you, and am your friend.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER XXXIX.

To the Duke D'AIGUILLO.[†]

YOU are too much my friend, sir, for me to let any opportunity slip of doing you service. I have asked the King's consent to your being

* The marriage, however, did not take place, because the Duke de Boutteville as a preliminary to it, demanded the liberty of the Duke d'Olonne, his son, who out of respect to his birth was imprisoned during life for a crime which merited the highest punishment. His demand was not allowed.

† Several letters addressed to Madame Du Barry, or written by her, in this collection, appear to be without dates. They were found so among her papers, and it is not certain whether this omission happened through design or negligence. However that was, it is thought better to lay them before the public in the same manner they came to our hands, than to make any addition.

commandant of the light horse guards, a commission you wished to purchase. "But the Duke de Choiseul asks it of me for the Viscount de Choiseul," says the King to me.—In that case, replied I, there is an additional reason why you should grant my request—to punish him in some degree for his ill-behaviour to me. His Majesty smiled, and said he could refuse me nothing. You are therefore pleased, and so am I. My compliments to my dear friend, Madame d'Aguillon. I wish you a good day, Mr. Commandant of the King's light horse guards.

The Countess Du BARRY.

LETTER XL.

From the Duke DE RICHELIEU.

My lovely Countess,

YOU must immediately put a stop to the insolence of the Count de Lauraguais. He has just taken a girl out of St. Honoré-street, has furnished a house for her, and has made her take the title every where of *Countess du Tonneau*. You see the sarcasm in this piece of impertinence. If it is winked at a few days, it will spread all over Paris; it must therefore be stopt * in its be-

* Madame du Barry laughed very heartily at the joke, but government was more severe. The poor Countess du Tonneau was sent to a house of correction; and the Count de Lauraguais escaped receiving a letter de cachet, by setting off immediately for London.

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46 LETTERS TO AND FROM

ginning. The Count de Lauraguais is a friend of the Duke de Choiseul; you see whence it arose. I am, with respect, my charming Countess, your most devoted humble servant,

The Duke DE RICHELIEU.

LETTER XLI.

To Madame DE MIREPOIX.

Versailles, January 1st, 1770.

I HAVE been this morning, my dear madam, according to my promise, to ask the king for the *Loges de Nantes** for you. But you cannot have it; and do you know why? Because the King had designed it as a new year's gift for a very bad woman. You easily guess I mean myself. The King insists upon my keeping it. Nothing could be more flattering, than the manner in which the King bestowed this favour †; but I should have been still better pleased if the King had given it you, because I find more satisfaction

in

* The *Loges de Nantes* might be worth about 40,000 livres a year, and belonged, during her life to the late Dutches de Lauraguais.

† It may perhaps be supposed that Madame du Barry solicited this favour for herself, instead of asking it for Madame de Mirepoix; but she was a woman of sincerity, and the short account she has given of the matter in her letter, does her less credit than the fact itself as it happened.

conferring favours than in receiving them. Ask me to do you a greater piece of service, and you will see with what pleasure I shall undertake it. I embrace you, my dear madam, most cordially.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER XLII.

To the Duke DE VILLEROI.

February 1st, 1770.

YOUR letter, sir, so far from excusing you to me, has only served to set me more against you, by exposing the unworthiness of your conduct, and the baseness of your disposition *. I will never see you, nor speak to you more. Do not set a foot within my doors.

The Countess DU BARRY.

* The Duke de Villeroi was a great libertine. He fell desperately in love with a waiting-maid in Madame du Barry's service, called Sophia, whom he debauched, and she proving with child, he took her to his house as his mistress. Choiseul knowing that he often went to Madame du Barry's house, reproached him with paying such servile court to her. " You are mistaken, (said the Duke) I should never have been seen in that creature's house, but for the sake of Sophy, her woman; and as a proof of what I say, I have taken her in keeping." This discourse reaching the ears of Madame du Barry, she forbade Villeroi her house; he was mean enough afterwards to write her a letter of excuse, to which this is a reply.

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LETTER XLIII.

From the Abbé TERRAY, Comptroller General of the Finances.

MADAM,

THE friendship you have been pleased to honour me with, and the kind things you have said of me to your august admirer, make it my duty to shew my gratitude in a most particular manner. I have now a design to execute, which I hope will meet with your approbation.

The King allows you a pension of 30,000 livres a month; which is certainly too little, considering the great expence you are obliged to be at. You know it well yourself, because you are under the necessity of drawing upon the court-banker, which drafts I take as cash in the accounts I settle with him. I shall advise his Majesty to double your allowance, and I shall recommend it to him, upon a principle of œconomy, as it will prevent your giving orders, or sending in bills for payment, which I shall tell him are to a considerable amount. Betwixt ourselves you may continue to draw as before, and I shall allow your drafts in the banker's account. This is what I am just now able to do, to shew you

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the zeal and attachment which I have for you, and which will end only with my * life. I am with respect, madam, &c,

TERRAY.

LETTER XLIV.

To the SAME.

YOU are, my dear Abbé, a most charming man. What you do must be for the best, and cannot but prove as agreeable to his Majesty, as it is to me. I thank you beforehand for your kindness. Believe me always ready to do you every service in my power. I wish you a good day.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER XLV.

From the Duke de RICHELIEU.

BEWARE, my charming Countess, how you follow the scheme which the Duke de Noailles has put into your head of going to Barèges, to drink the waters there, in order to avoid being present at the arrival of the Dauphiness;

* This regulation accordingly took place, and Madame Du Barry not only drew upon the court-banker as before, but her brother-in-law did the same, and that to what amount he pleased. The Abbé Terray died at his house at La Motte, the 22d February, 1778.

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under pretence that you would be quite eclipsed amidst the entertainments prepared for her reception, and that the Princess might offer you some flight. The Duke de Noailles in giving you this advice has proved himself not your friend, and that he has been put upon it by the Duke de Choiseul, who certainly wishes to take advantage of your absence to ruin you with the King. You are the divinity his Majesty adores; leave him not therefore for a moment. Young, and handsome as you are, you do not know the danger of absence. What means might not then be made use of to draw him off from a passion, which now constitutes his whole happiness, but which would then be represented to him in the most odious colours! Age weakens desire, unless it is constantly excited. I shall say no more, but be assured, my lovely Countess, you risk every thing if you are once absent. I am, with great respect, &c.

The Duke de RICHELIEU,

LETTER XLVI.

To the Duke d' AIGUILLOU,

30th August, 1770.

I THANK you, my dear Duke, for your advice. Richelieu was of your opinion, and I am now well pleased that I followed it, since the

Dauphineſſ received me ſo graciously. With reſpect to your affair, though I am not a woman of buſineſſ, yet I affiſted the Chancellor yeſterday in obtaining a ſtop to the proceedings againſt you in Parliament. I told the King, as we had agreed, that Choifeul had made a party amongſt the judges againſt you, because you had favoured my intereſt. His Maieſty has determined to go and withdraw all the papers relative to the buſineſſ, as he looks upon you to be fully cleared from the accuſations laid to your charge. You may now reſt eaſy. I embracē my dear Dutchesſ, and wiſh you a good day.

The Counteſſ Du BARRY.

LETTER XLVII.

To the SAME.

I BELIEVE it is imposſible, my dear Duke, for art to produce a perfeſter, or more elegant work of its kind, than the vis-à-vis which you have ſent* me. How much ought I to admire the great taste of the director of this

* Upon Madame Du Barry's foliciation the King held a Bed of Justice on the 30th of September, 1770, and withdrew the papers relating to the proceedings againſt the Duke d' Aiguillon. In acknowledgment of this piece of ſervice, the Duke had a vis-à-vis built and preſented to his benefactreſſ. Nothing of the kind could be more magniſcent; it excited the curioſity of the whole city of Paris. It coſt the Duke 50,000 livres,

magnificent piece of art, whilst I look with astonishment at the extraordinary talents of the artists employed upon it! I shall have a particular pleasure in making the King partaker of my satisfaction. However, as nothing of the kind was ever produced of so much grandeur, I am uneasy lest his Majesty should oppose the earnest desire I feel to make use of this * present. But be that as it will, I beg you to accept of my acknowledgments, and to rest assured that whilst I live I shall be always ready upon every occasion to give you proofs of the sincere attachment with which I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER XLVIII.

From the Duke DE NOAILLES.

MADAM,

I AM charged with a commission from the Duchess de Grammont to you, and find the more pleasure in fulfilling it as it gives me an opportunity to treat with the divinity that forms the delight of the court. The lady in question is unhappy not to be upon good terms with you. She is not able to account for the coolness which

* Madame Du Barry actually never made use of this carriage, as the King thinking it too fine commanded her not.

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subsists betwixt you. She has a particular regard for you, and as she is just returned from her travels, she wishes to make peace with you. She has chosen me for her mediator. May I flatter myself with success? For my own part, I can assure you that she is very unhappy to have behaved to you upon some occasions as she has done; but this confession, and the step she has now taken ought to obtain her pardon, especially with a lady, that like you, madam, has several times discovered great generosity of temper. I beg, therefore, you will grant her request, and honour me with an answer. I am, with respect, &c.

The Duke DE NOAILLES.

LETTER XLIX.

To the SAME.

HOW, sir, is the Dutchess de Grammont at a loss to assign a reason for my coolness towards her? Can she have forgot her insulting haughtiness, and the indecent manner in which she treated me? Can she have forgot the songs she caused to be made, as well against the King, to whom she owed many obligations, as against me? Has she forgot all her little artifices, and wicked plots to injure me with the King, and

royal

royal family? If all these villainous attempts are blotted out of her memory, they are still fresh in mine—but they remain there only to be despised. Notwithstanding this, I bear her no ill will. Tell her, I shall never think of her, provided I never see her. If she never appears at court, but lives quietly at Paris, I promise her and you that I will never interrupt her repose. If she could still ruin me I am persuaded she would do it. I am more generous than she is, and I am content to wish she would honour me with her indifference, as I promise her mine. I am, sir, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER L.

From the Chancellor MAUPPEOU.

December 5th, 1770,

Madam, and dear Cousin,

YOU have as great an influence over the affairs of government, as if you held the reins of state in your own hands; therefore, as our interest is the same, we ought to be strictly united, and do nothing but for the public good, in which, as good subjects, our advantage is concerned. We gave the day before yesterday, as you well ob-

served, a little chaitisement to the Parliament, in recommending to that body to be circumspect for the future; but this haughty court, whose ambition aims even at the usurpation of the sovereign authority, is encouraged by the Duke de Choiseul, its protector, to remonstrate against his Majesty's new law, which is in reality no more than an old regulation revived that has been registered above a century ago, and continued ever since in force. As the Duke de Choiseul is our common enemy, and more yours than he is mine, since you are not safe so long as he continues in place, and as the moment is now come when we may rid ourselves of him for ever, let us both be firmly united.

Let your part be to insinuate continually to his majesty that Choiseul is secretly stirring up the Parliament to rebel against him. I shall give his majesty the strongest proofs to confirm what you advance in a slight matter; and I shall shew him, by papers in my possession, that the Dutchesse de Grammont, under pretence of travelling for her pleasure, has endeavoured to stir up the other Parliaments, and render them disobedient to his orders. The Duke d'Aiguillon, and the Abbé Terray, will artfully give his majesty to understand, that Choiseul, in order to preserve his interest, uses indirect methods to bring

bring on a war, though to all appearance he gives into his majesty's pacific views.

This is more than enough to work the ruin of this ambitious minister with our monarch, who entertains little regard for him at present, and keeps him in office only because he is become accustomed to him; and in a manner against his inclinations, as he fears him, and looks upon him to be a useful man. This is the line of conduct we are to pursue.

I am delighted with your late pleasantries on the subject of Choiseul*. These kind of strokes have their good effect; but it requires a degree of wit equal to that you possess to invent such well-timed ones. I need not recommend secrecy to you in our proceedings, you are as much concerned in concealing them as I can be. I am with respect, &c,

DE MAUPEOU.

* Two strokes of Madame Du Barry's wit with respect to Choiseul have been made public, but which of them the Chancellor speaks of in this letter, does not appear. They are these.

One day, as Madame Du Barry was with the King, she held two oranges in her hand, which she threw from her, crying, *away Choiseul; away Prafull.*

Another time she met one of her cooks upon the stairs, who something resembled the Duke. "Are you in my service?" said she to him. "Yes, madam," replied the cook. "You have a very ill look," said she, "go to my steward, tell him to discharge you directly, and let me see you no more." Her orders were instantly obeyed; and being the same evening with the King, she told him of it, adding, "I have dismissed my Choiseul, when do you dismiss yours?"

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LETTER LI.

To the Duke de la VRILLIERE.

24th December, 1770, ten o'clock in the morning.

HEREWITH are two letters de cachet which the King has signed, and which he directs you to communicate to the Duke de Choiseul and Praeflin immediately. Lose not a * moment. I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER LII.

From the Duke d'AIGUILLOU.

27th December, 1770.

I HAVE received, madam, too many marks of your favour to be at all surprized at the fresh

* These Letters de Cachet were as follow :

1. That to the Duke de Choiseul ;

" Cousin,

" The dissatisfaction I have from your services, obliges me to banish you to Chanteloup, whither you must go in four-and-twenty hours. I would have sent you farther off but for the particular regard I have for the Duchess de Choiseul, whose state of health I consider. Have a care that your conduct does not oblige me to take other measures. And I pray God to have you in his holy keeping."

LOUIS.

2. That to the Duke de Praeflin ;

" I have no further occasion for your services, and I banish you to Praeflin, where I expect you to go in four-and-twenty hours."

LOUIS.

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instance

instance of your goodness which you now honour me with. Permit me, at the same time that I return you my acknowledgments, to offer a few reflexions on the actual situation of things.

The striking proof I have received of the King's protection in my affair, has raised me many enemies; and that event is too recent to make it at all prudent in me to accept, just at this time, the place you have prevailed on his Majesty to appoint me to. Besides * which, madam, the universal concern discovered by the public in general for our enemies at the moment of their exile, made it rather a matter of triumph to them, and cannot but operate disagreeably on those who shall be their successors. I think then, without discussing the point any further, it will be more prudent in me to stay behind the curtain for some time, and wait a more favourable opportunity for making my entrance on the theatre. All the precaution to be used will be, to take care that the persons who hold the places in the interim, are not such as have power or abilities to make us fear they will keep them in defiance of us. When the people have vented their spleen upon them, and when, from their

* The place here spoken of, is that of Minister of the Marine Department, which Madame Du Barry had procured for the Duke, and which upon a principle of sound policy he refused to accept at this time.

unskilful management of affairs, a change seems to be wished for by the public, it will then be time for me to appear. As I shall then become in a manner necessary, I shall have it more in my power to give you real proofs of my attachment. You do not want sagacity, madam, to comprehend my plan, nor address to assist me in the execution of it. You know well there are times when, according to a vulgar observation, *we should go back in order to leap the further.*

I am, &c.

The Duke d'Aiguillon.

LETTER LIII.

To the Abbé TERRAY.

3d January, 1771.

THE King is still undetermined, my dear Abbé, whom to fix upon for the office of Minister for the Marine Department. I mentioned you, and I imagined the Chancellor, who was by at the time, would have seconded me; but he said not a word. His Majesty replied, that several had been proposed to him, but he did not know to whom to give the preference. However, that there may be no delay in the business of this department, through the uncertainty of the King's mind, I have advised his Majesty to give you that post, upon condition

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that you resign it upon another Minister being appointed. His majesty has consented, and you now hold the office of Minister of the Marine department *in commendam*; let it be your care, my dear Abbé, to conduct yourself in this new office in such a manner that you may be settled in it. As the war-department would not suit you, I did not think of proposing it for you. The Prince de Condé has been very busy in soliciting the king for a Marquis de Monteynard, whom I do not at all know. The king has given his consent, and we shall see what he can do, and how we shall like * him. Adieu; believe me always your friend,

The Countess DU BARRY.

* As every thing is done for interest, the Prince de Condé had his in the appointment of the Marquis de Monteynard. He had a long time wished for the re-establishment of the office of Grand Master of the Artillery in his favour, which would have been worth to him annually 400,000 livres; and he thought that the minister of the war-department being his creature, he would be the first to make this proposal for him. But the Marquis de Monteynard (whether it was, that he was unwilling to reduce his own income and authority by detaching so large a portion of his department, or whether he really consulted the good of the state) represented to the King, that at a time when the situation of his finances required a reduction of the war-extraordinaries, it did not seem proper to load the establishment by granting the prince such a favour. The business was accordingly dropped.

LETTER LIV.

From the Chancellor MAUPEOU.

Madam, and dear Cousin,

I DO not conceal from you, that so far from engaging the King to appoint the Abbé Terray to the marine department, I have solicited it for M. Bourgeois de Boynes; and I beg of you, that you will not insist upon its being given to the Abbé, though you should not chuse to speak to his Majesty in my friend's favour. You know I made the Abbé Terray comptroller-general; and I hoped to attach him to me, and engage him to forward all my schemes; this, to be sure, he has not failed to promise me, but he had determined with himself not to be as good as his word. So far from furnishing me with what was necessary for breaking the parliament, and ruining our enemies, the Choiseul-party, he was continually raising fresh difficulties in my way. No one was better instructed in all the secrets of the parliament, or knew the characters, dispositions, and views of his ancient colleagues than he did; yet he gave me not the least assistance, nor offered me any advice, but left me to bear the whole weight and trouble of the enterprize myself. It was not, you may be assured, that he consulted the public good, or that he felt

52 LETTERS TO AND FROM

any sentiments of compassion, or regard for his colleagues, but that he considered my project as impracticable. He was in hopes that I should sink under it; and then he saw a prospect of succeeding me in the first office of justice, when he meant to propose a plan directly contrary to mine. Fortunately, M. de Boynes assisted me; he communicated to me all he knew; he aided me in the execution of my plan; and now lends me the same help. The King is acquainted with his abilities and merit, and I hope will reward him with the office of minister of the marine department; and I wish it the more, because he will find in him a man of sound judgment, and great application*. I beg therefore, madam, and dear cousin, that you will not overset my design, because it will have the best consequences. As to the Abbé Terray, we must by no means break with him, but soften him by fair promises, and by this means keep him in continual dependance. I expect you to dinner tomorrow according to promise; notwithstanding the business we have upon our hands, I hope you will divert yourself. I have the honour to be,
&c.

DE MAUPEOU.

* This M. de Boynes was no better than the Chancellor or the Abbé Terray. He was an intriguing man, who in order to advance himself into the council, made himself useful to the Chancellor, and served him at first faithfully; but as soon as he had got footing, he formed his own party, and strove to raise himself on the ruin of his patron, and the Abbé, whose advancement he envied.

LETTER LV.

To the Abbé TERRAY.

YOU are wrong, my dear Abbé, to suppose that it was owing to me that the marine department is given to M^r. de Boynes: You may be assured that I did not interfere in the appointment; and, for my own part, I am sorry you had not the preference. You must not on that account be out of humour, as I find you are; nor think of throwing up your post, because it would be you that would suffer, if the King accepted your resignation. I asked his Majesty, why he had not thought of you for that office; and he answered me, that nobody understood the actual state of his finances so well as yourself, and therefore you would be more useful to him in your present office than in any other. So I would not have you cast yourself down, but be diligent in your post, and give universal satisfaction; and let your business be put on such a regular plan that any one may pursue your track; we can then put you into employment of more consequence. You know the office of minister for foreign affairs is vacant; the King does not mean to appoint any body to it yet, and it is not impossible but he may name you to it. I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER LVI.

To the Baron DE BRETEUIL.

SIR,

PRINCE Lewis has solicited to go ambassador to the court of Vienna, and has got the Prince de Soubise likewise to solicit for him. The King could not refuse it. But as that embassy was intended for you*, I have prevailed on his Majesty to appoint you for Naples, which though it is indeed less important, is yet full as honourable. His Majesty consented to this proposal with great pleasure, as he is well acquainted with your merit and abilities. I am, sir, &c.

The COUNTESS DU BARRY.

LETTER LVII.

From the Chancellor MAUPEOU.

Madam, and dear Cousin,

I see that you are as well acquainted with the character of your august lover, as I am myself.

He

* The Baron de Breteuil was a creature of the Duke de Choiseul's, and a person who had great merit in point of negotiation. But it was feared that he would intrigue with the Queen of Hungary, and engage her to write pressingly in favour of the Duke de Choiseul. It was essential to the partizans of Madame du Barry, to have a person at

He is too good, too easy; the severity he has shewn in punishing his refractory Parliament, appears to him to be too great. It is for his interest that no alteration be made; and by a natural consequence it is essentially ours, for we have declared ourselves too openly against those tribunals not to have every thing to fear from their re-establishment. His Majesty must be alarmed then, just when his easiness is on the point of changing to mildness; and he must be inspired with resolution in spite of nature. For this purpose we must put every device in practice. One now presents itself which must not escape us. Amongst the pictures to be sold out of the cabinet of the late Baron de Thiers, is a portrait of Charles I. King of England, whose head was cut off by his Parliament. Purchase that picture at any price, under pretence of its being a family picture, because the Du Barrys spring from the house of Stuart. You will place it in your apartment, by the side of the King's picture, and when his Majesty views it, he will of course lament the fate of the English monarch; you must take that opportunity to observe, that perhaps

the court of Vienna, who was devoted to them; the preference, therefore, was given to Prince Lewis, before whose very eyes, in a manner, the partition of Poland was made, without his being acquainted with it. When the King heard of it, he said with great bitterness; "Ah, if I had had Choiseul with me now, this had never happened." But he fell again into his accustomed indolence, and soon forgot this loss.

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his Parliament might have attempted the same, if I had not detected their criminal designs before they had arrived to such a pitch of daring wickedness. An apprehension of this nature suggested by you, my dear Cousin, will steel him against all the attempts and machinations of our enemies *. Burn this letter, but observe its contents. I am, with respect, &c.

DE MAUPEOU.

LETTER LVIII.

From the COUNT DU BARRY.

May 23d, 1771.

I AM now returned home, my dear sister, after my journey, and I find with very great satisfaction, that you are in the highest favour. My sister communicated to you the letters which I wrote for your instruction, and you see the good consequences of suffering yourself to be guided by them. You are now rid of your most dangerous enemy; the ministers are all intirely devoted to you, the Chancellor, M. de Boynes, the Abbé Terray, the Duke de la Vrillière, and the Prince de Soubise. But this is not enough;

* Madame du Barry really put the Chancellor's advice in execution. Absurd and wicked as this imputation was, the Prince kindled at it instantly, and it was from before this portrait that issued those flames which destroyed the magistracy in the remotest parts of the kingdom.

there

there is a post still vacant, and we must fill it up ourselves. Our friend d'Aiguillon is pressing us continually to prevail on you to beg the King to name him to it. He is worthy of it in every respect, and his cause is now forgot by the public: It is now six months since; so that there can remain no obstacle in his way. He has just left me with the Duke de la Vrillière, and I promised them both that it should be so. You see, my dear sister, that we must not lose sight of this object.

You made a complaint lately to my sister, (doubtless that she might acquaint me with it,) that I drew too large sums upon the banker of the court. The amount must certainly have been represented to you as much larger than it is; I have only as yet received two millions three hundred thousand livres; and even if I had drawn for more, who is there to say against it? It cannot be the King, for no one durst venture to tell him of it. You would not, for you owe your good fortune to me, and surely I ought to partake a little of it. The banker would not, because when he passes his accounts, my drafts are allowed as cash. The Abbé Terray would not, because he fears us, as the least word out of your mouth or mine would instantly ruin him. The Chancellor, our cousin, would not, because

we keep him in place. Nobody then can accuse us; let us therefore continue to make advantage of fortune whilst she is favourable. I embrace you, and am, &c.

The Count DU BARRY.

LETTER LIX.

From the Princess DE CONTI.

May 28th, 1771.

YOU cannot but suppose, madam, that it gives every branch of the royal family great trouble to see the Princes driven from court, and in disgrace with the King. They who are about you, have persuaded you to use all your credit to forward this melancholy event. I am disposed to think that you entered into their designs, only because you were deceived by the prospect of present advantage, and did not foresee the bad consequences that might follow. Things are now at a crisis, and cannot remain long in the same situation. What glory would it be for you, if by employing your credit to repair the injury you have done, and to restore peace within the kingdom, you prevailed upon his Majesty to recall the illustrious exiles, whom he was forced to punish in that manner, because they were represented as rebelling against his will

will, though in reality they were only opposing the total overthrow of the laws, and thereby giving the strongest proofs of their steady attachment to his true interests! If the justice of their cause does not move you to defend it, your own private interest should engage you to do it. Consider, madam, what would be your situation, if we were to lose the King! Supposing you stood in no fear of the most dreadful catastrophe, can you calmly reckon up the number and quality of the enemies you have made yourself? As numerous as these are, you have it this day in your power to make as many friends. By a step, which will do you honour with all posterity, you may with great ease acquire a claim to their esteem and acknowledgments, as well as to mine, who am, &c.

The Princess DE CONTI.

LETTER LX.

From M. DE MAUPEOU.

June 1st, 1771.

I HAVE been consulting, madam, and dear cousin, this morning with the Duke d'Aiguillon upon the project of your marriage with the King; and we agreed that the thing was not impracticable. You know that we have a precedent

cedent of a like marriage betwixt Lewis XIV. and Madame de Maintenon, and circumstances are much more in your favour than they were in that lady's, who never had so much power over the King as you have. Besides, Lewis XIV. was of a haughty, untractable disposition; his successor, on the contrary, is tractable even to a degree of timidity, and is easily governed. But to gain this point it is absolutely necessary that the parliament still continue broken, and the princes kept from court. If they should happen to be restored to favour, you would find that the hope you now derive from circumstances would become an idle chimera. It is therefore of the greatest consequence, my charming cousin, that you support me with all your credit. Rest well assured, that I on my part will not be inactive, and whilst we are united against them, the efforts of all your enemies will be vain. You must now think seriously of putting the Duke d'Aiguillon at the head of the foreign affairs, because in that capacity he cannot only procure you the favour of other powers, but will be able to solicit with earnestness the dispensation which it will be necessary to procure from the court of Rome.

LETTER LXI.

From the Duke D' AIGUILLO.

June 30th, 1771.

YOU had too considerable a share, madam, in my nomination to the department of foreign affairs, to leave you in doubt of my gratitude, or of my willingness to give you proofs of it. I have already had a conversation with the Pope's Nuncio on the subject of the dispensation you wish to obtain, and he has promised me to serve you in that business. To conduct this negotiation in a regular manner, it will be necessary that you should put your name to the * memorial which is herewith inclosed. I shall afterwards

* The memorial being too long to insert at length, we shall only give the heads of it here.

" Madame Du Barry represents to his holiness, that not being versed in canonical law, she did not know 'till since her marriage with Count William Du Barry, that it was unlawful to marry the brother of a man with whom she had lived. She confesses with great contrition, that she had yielded to the force of her passion for Count John Du Barry, her husband's brother; but that she was warned in time of the incest she was about to commit, and that convinced of the heinousness of the offence, she has never since cohabited with her husband; she has therefore hitherto not been guilty of the crime of incest, and prays his holiness to set her free from so scandalous an union."

This projected marriage with the King, was, however, no more than a lure which the Chancellor, the Duke d' Aiguillon and the Abbé

Tertay

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afterwards deliver it to the Nuncio, who undertakes to present it with his own hands to his Holiness. On my part, I shall write to Cardinal de Bernis to solicit in its behalf very strongly. I am, &c.

The Duke D'AIGUILLO.

LETTER LXII.

From the Abbé TERRAY.

5th August, 1771.

I AM too sensible, madam, of the many instances I have the honour to have had of your friendship, not to testify my gratitude when opportunity serves. An occasion now offers which I hope will be agreeable to you.

The King granted an annuity of 300,000 livres to the Count de Clermont during his life. The Count is just dead, and of course his Majesty is a gainer by his death of 300,000 livres a year. As you pay no regard to your own interest, it is but right that your friends should consult it for you. I am just come from an audience of the King on this head. I represented to his Majesty that the disinterested regard you had

Terray held out to Madame Du Barry to draw her into their schemes, and secure her interest with his Majesty. They well knew how chimerical such a project was; but an affair of that great consequence could not speedily be brought to a conclusion, and delay was all they wished for.

for

for his person left you no time to think of any thing, but how to please him, and how best to shew your gratitude for the favours he honoured you with; that I therefore thought it was but justice in him to make a settlement upon you of part of the Count de Clermont's annuity, the rather, as it would make no alteration in his finances, nor be in the least burthensome to his people. His Majesty thanked me for proposing it to him, and has made you a gift of one third of the sum. It is with great pleasure that I take the earliest opportunity of giving you this information, and of repeating the assurances of respect with which I am, &c.

TERRAY.

LETTER LXIII.

To the SAME.

5th August, 1771.

THE King has just now confirmed to me, my dear Abbé, the information you gave me this morning. Receive my acknowledgments; at the same time let me acquaint you that out of the 200,000 livres remaining of Count de Clermont's annuity, I have asked for 50,000 livres for you, in return for your services, which his Majesty very graciously complied with. This

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is the revenge I take for what you have done to me. Believe me whilst I live to have always the same inclination to serve you.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER LXIV.

To the Chancellor MAUPEOU.

7th August, 1771.

Mr. Chancellor,

I WAS yesterday with the King. The Abbé Terray came, and gave his Majesty many thanks for the 50,000 livres of annuity which the King granted him at my instance, out of the 300,000 livres gained by the death of the Count de Clermont; out of which likewise I have had one third given me upon the recommendation of the Comptroller General. The King asked then what was to be done with the remaining 150,000 livres? "Sire," replied I, "my cousin the Chancellor is deserving of as much as the Abbé; you know the great services he has done you, and now you have it in your power to make him a recompence." "Yes, sire," added the Abbé Terray immediately, "it will make him amends for the extinction of so many emoluments which used to bring him in a considerable sum, all which he has given up without

" without any consideration, as well as the fees
" of the *Marc d'or* to the new officers of justice." This Abbé, poor devil, is not such a bad creature, take him altogether. What say you, my dear cousin? He entered as warmly into your interest as if it had been his own. For my own part I think myself much obliged to him*. I am, &c.

The Countess Du BARRY.

LETTER LXV.

To the SAME.

Mr. Chancellor,

IN spite of all the long-winded remonstrances of the Marquis de Monteynard to the contrary, I have at last obtained his Majesty's consent to the appointment of your son to the regiment you wished him to have. I am in haste to give you the earliest intelligence, and I hope you will find as much pleasure in reading this, as I do in writing it. I am, &c.

The Countess Du BARRY.

* One might have thought that the King would at least have kept the 100,000 livres that remained for himself. But it was no such thing. The Count de la Marche heard of the windfall, and he must needs pick up a share. He represented to the King that he was the only Prince of the Blood that remained attached to his person, and who had approved of the Chancellor's operations. To reward his zeal he had the 100,000 livres granted to him.

LETTER LXVI.

To M. DE SARTINE, Lieutenant General of
the Police.

IT is impossible for me, sir, to express to you how much I am displeased with a book that has made its appearance lately; and of which the copies are more common than they ought to be. You cannot be ignorant to what lengths insolence towards the King, his ministers, the whole court, and myself in particular is carried, in a pamphlet intitled *le Gazettier* cuirassé* [the Gazetteer in armour.] I make no doubt but you can suppress all the copies of so infamous a work, if you are not able to discover its author, and punish him with all the rigour he deserves. I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

* An unconnected rhapsody of lies and abuse against the King, and in a manner against all France. What particularly offended Madame Du Barry was, certain articles, absolutely false; but which placed her in a very despicable light. Amongst other absurdities in this book, she is said to be the daughter of Father Ange Picpus; to have given a fashionable disorder to the Marquis de Chabrillant; to have been a common woman in Paris for fifteen years, &c. &c.

LETTER LXVII.

From the Duke DE LA VRILLIERE.

I BEG you, madam, to accept of my most humble excuse for the accident which happened yesterday to me at your house*. You are sensible that it was occasioned by the zeal which I shewed for you, in endeavouring to prevent any favours being bestowed without your participation or knowledge. Be assured that the mortification I endured will not abate my eagerness to serve you, and that you will always find me ready to give you every proof of the perfect devotion with which I am, &c.

The Duke DE LA VRILLIERE.

* The King had promised that Madame du Barry should name the officers to the household of the Count d'Artois, which was just then going to be established. The Marchioness de Mêmes had engaged Madame Sophia to solicit a place for her son. Madame Sophia addressed herself directly to the King, who granted her request. But the Duke de la Vrilliere piqued that this favour should be granted unknown to him, complained to Madame du Barry, shewing her at the same time the inconveniences which would arise, if the King gave away places without his knowledge, engaging her to speak to the King, and delayed making out the appointment. Madame Sophia informed of what was going forward, sent for the Duke, ordered him to make out the warrant, and took this occasion of rating him for the scandalous traffick in places within his department, which was carried on by him, and his mistress Madame Langeac. The poor Duke received this lesson just after he had, according to custom, made a plentiful dinner. He went immediately to Madame du Barry's, where, whilst he was relating the story, he gave plain demonstrations of an indigestion. He remained senseless, and was carried home in this pretty pickle. To excuse himself he writes this letter,

LETTER LXVIII.

From the Duke d'Aiguillon.

I AM much concerned, my dear Countess, that I was not able to get admittance into your house, for I do suppose you were at home, notwithstanding the many assurances of your porter to the contrary. I went purposely to console with you on the ill-treatment you met with from the Dauphin. If any thing agreeable had happened, I doubt whether I should have heard of it so speedily. This unlucky accident but too plainly shews you the truth of what I have frequently had the honour to tell you, when I knew you hazarded some pleasantries upon the prince—that he was not of a temper to take them *. It would be unnecessary to give you any advice upon this head, because you must be sensible that you ought to be more upon your

* Madame du Barry had the imprudence to joke upon the supposed impotency of the Dauphin, and it came to his hearing. Upon which he went to her in a great passion, and gave her to understand in very strong terms, that she must not think to take such liberties with him. The place of *first Equerry* being at that time intended for the Viscount du Barry, he told her, "If your nephew gets that place, let him have a care, for the first time he comes near me I will kick off my boot in his face." Madame du Barry was so much mortified with this rebuff, that she shut herself up for a whole day. The Duke d'Aiguillon not being able to get admittance to her, writes this letter to console her on her disgrace.

guard.

guard. I think it would be to no purpose to take any steps towards a reconciliation; you would only be sure to meet with an ill reception, and be only still more humbled. Endeavour to gain a larger share of influence over the King; the marks of favour with which he is honouring you, will keep your enemies at a respectful distance. I am, &c.

The Duke D'AIGUILLO.

L E T T E R LXIX.

To the SAME.

I BEGIN to think, sir, it was not without reason you told me I ought not to place much confidence in the Chancellor. I have just discovered that he has been endeavouring to get the place of *first Equerry* for his son, though he assured me with many protestations to the contrary, and though he knew well enough that I solicited it for Viscount Du Barry. I do not think the King will give it to my nephew, nor do I wish it since what has happened betwixt the Dauphin and me. I am very glad, however, to know what estimation I am to hold M. de Maupeou's word in; and I shall most assuredly be even with him. Apropos, I cannot think who gave the

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information to that Marigny so very opportunely for him to disconcert our plan of removing him from his post*.

LETTER LXX.

From the Abbé TERRAY.

MADAM,

IT is with reason that you wish the place of superintendant of the Royal Buildings should be given to your brother. But to come at it, we must make the King dissatisfied with the Marquis de Marigny; and this is the way in which I intend to bring that about.

You know that funds have for a long time been wanting for this department; circumstances authorize me to refuse money for these purposes without any danger of being thought to entertain a personal dislike, consequently the Royal Buildings are greatly out of repair, which is matter of much displeasure to his Majesty. The next work the King orders to be done, I

* The Marquis de Marigny was superintendant of the Royal Buildings. The du Barrys looking upon this place as properly belonging to the family of the King's favourite mistres, had solicited it for a long time, and spoke ill of the Marquis to the King. Marigny hearing of it, came to court to clear his conduct, and the King acquiesced in his defence. The Abbé Terray, however, in order to pay his court to the Du Barrys, procured the place afterwards for himself. The next letter will explain that transaction.

shall

shall be more unwilling to part with money than ever; nay, I shall absolutely refuse letting the Marquis have any: Do you then take that opportunity to insinuate to his Majesty, that if I am appointed to this office, his finances being under my direction, I cannot plead the same excuse as the present superintendant, and that whatever his Majesty should order to be built, will be immediately done. The Marquis being thus removed, I shall after a time represent to the King that the multiplicity of business in my department, does not permit me to attend to the duties of any new office; and I shall then propose his giving the superintendance to the Count * Du Barry. This plan I think practicable, and I would recommend it to you. I have no other view in proposing it than to do you a favour. I am, &c.

TERRAY.

LETTER LXXI.

To M. DE SARTINE, Lieutenant-General of
the Police.

SIR,

THE principal duty of your office is, as I take it, to prevent the circulation of libels

* This project actually did succeed; an opportunity presented itself soon after at the Castle of Bellevue; Marigny was superseded by the Abbé Terray.

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against

against the honour of the King. Your vigilance is however not to be commended upon this important point. There are some scandalous verses which spread every where about Paris; a copy of which has been sent to me. Find out the author and punish him, and let the verses be suppressed; otherwise I shall be under the necessity of shewing them to his Majesty, and persuading him to put somebody more to be depended upon into your place. I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER LXXII.

To the Duke D' AIGUILLOU.

My dear Duke,

I FIND my husband is actually in Paris, brought thither by the malicious reports of his death. See him, and pray advise him to behave with decency the little time he stays in the * capital. Tell him further, if there is the least cause of complaint against him, that he shall be instantly banished for the rest of his life. I embrace you most cordially, and am your friend,

The Countess DU BARRY.

* Count William Du Barry was a filthy drunkard, and addicted to the lowest debauchery.

LETTER LXXIII.

To the SAME.

I AM convinced, my dear Duke, that the Chancellor is a scoundrel. He gave me reason to hope for the pardon of Billard, which I had solicited, not for the poor wretch's sake, but to oblige his * uncle, who will be disgraced by the execution of his sentence. He has managed the matter so that the King will not hearken to my request. Indeed, we must get rid of this man. I am willing to fall in with your scheme, and am ready to do whatever you advise in that respect. I greet you well, my dear Duke, and am your friend.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER LXXIV.

From Count WILLIAM DU BARRY.

Madam, and most honoured Spouse,

I WAS simple enough the day before yesterday to lose a thousand louis d'ors with the Marquis de Chabrillant. I went to my brother to borrow the money of him, but he had the as-

* Mr. Billard de Monceau, her godfather.

furance to bid me be gone about my business, and told me I might live upon my pension, and that he had debts enough of his own to satisfy without paying mine. I own to you that I take this very ill of him. You know that play-debts are debts of honour; so I beg you to let me have this money, otherwise I can never shew my face any where. I shall take care how I ask my brother again, for he does not care at all for me, but is squandering away his money at a monstrous rate. To prove what I say, he has just stood godfather with his woman there, Madame de Murat, to a child of Mademoiselle * Beauvoisin's; and this foolish affair, which would have cost me no more than ten louis, has been an expence to him of above a thousand, which he would have bestowed much better by giving them to me. I promise you that I will

* Madame Du Barry's brother-in-Law was now got to the highest pitch of extravagance. He kept a woman, whom he married to a knight of the order of St. Lewis, of the name of Murat, upon whom he settled a pension of two thousand crowns, upon condition that he should retain his mistres. He afterwards bought for her the title of Marchioness; and was so imprudent as to stand godfather publicly with her, to the bastard of a famous courtezan called Beauvoisin. The christening was at Montmartre near Paris, and was attended by twelve coaches; and as the parish church is on the highest part of the hill, the curate had the complaisance to come down to a little chapel where the ceremony was performed. The presents, &c. on this occasion, actually cost the Count betwixt 24 and 25,000 livres, besides a pension which he settled on his spurious godson of 1200 livres.

never play so high again; on the contrary, I will endeavour to win, that I may give you no further trouble of this kind. I have the honour to be, with great respect, &c.

Count WILLIAM DU BARRY.

LETTER LXXV.

To the SAME.

I SEND you a thousand louis-d'ors to discharge your debt at play; and as much more to carry you out of Paris, that you may not be a disgrace to me. I know that you lead a shocking life at Paris, and that every body despises you most heartily. Take care that you do not stay above a week longer.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER LXXVI.

From the Abbé TERRAY.

MADAM,

THE idea of seeing you a second Madame de Maintenon is certainly a charming one, and no body would wish it realized more than myself. But these great designs must now give place to your immediate interest. If any change should

should happen, either by your falling under disgrace, or that we should have the misfortune to lose the King, what is to become of you? By your marriage contract, whatever you possess is as much the Count's, as it is yours. As your husband, he would immediately lay hands upon your fortune, and reduce you to a miserable state of dependance upon him. I advise you therefore to get a separation from him; your fortune will then be your own, to dispose of as you please. I have consulted with the Duke d'Aiguillon upon the subject, and he approves of my schéme. Sign the paper I send you for this purpose, and rely upon my care in bringing this busines to a conclusion. This affair will be no obstacle to the design of marrying you to the King.

LETTER LXXVII.

From the SAME.

MADAM,

NOTHING could please me more than the honour you did me yesterday of dining with me. Madame Damerval* is quite delighted with

* Madame Damerval was a bastard daughter of Abbé Terray's, by his first mistress Madame de Clerci. He married her at twelve years of age to the Sieur Damerval, brother of Madame de la Garde, his

with your great condescension, and begs to be admitted to a place in your friendship, and to be allowed to pay her court to you often. Her design is simply to contribute to your amusement; but betwixt ourselves, I would beg leave to say she might be of real use to you. The age of the King, and his immoderate love of pleasure render some change necessary. Your charms have not power to fix so inconstant a lover; if he should chance by means of any other person to have a fine young creature introduced to him, his affections might waver for a time, and occasion be taken of the easiness of his temper to detach him from you. You know lately the Princess de Lamballe pleased him very much. I would therefore advise you as a friend to have some young lady about you to engage the monarch's fancy. He would not esteem you the less on that account, but on the contrary would owe to you the obligation of a new pleasure. By thus furnishing him with variety, you might maintain your influence, as Madame de Pompadour did by the very same means. Little Damerval exactly answers your purpose; she is a girl who has not wit enough to please the King for any time, and you might at pleasure substi-

his second mistress. This man was advanced in years, had no fortune, and was quite incapable from want of abilities, of profiting by the credit of his father-in-law. They were soon parted, and she returned to live with her father,

tute another in her place, whenever you found it necessary *. This however is a hint thrown out at random. If you approve of my scheme, it may be of service to you; it is with this view only I mention it. You can have no doubt of the respectful attachment with which I am, &c.

TERRAY,

LETTER LXXVIII.

From MICHAEL OULIFF, a Jew.

MADAM,

I AM just informed that there is a letter de
cachet out against me to imprison me on ac-
count of the order for 66,000 livres which you
lately signed. Madam, I entreat you not to
ruin me. You know I never wronged you. You
owed me an old debt of 60,000 livres, which
added to your last purchase of 6000 livres, made
the sum of 66,000, which you gave the order
for. On my telling you I was in great want of
money, you bade me draw the order, which you
were good enough to sign. It was true you
thought you signed an order only for 6000 livres,

* The Abbé's design was to make Damerval supplant Madame du Barry. As he could not present his bastard-daughter himself to the King, by a refinement of policy he got the Countess to be the go-between. But his project fell to the ground; for if the King did honour her with his notice, it was only for a very short time, and Du Barry continued as great a favourite as ever.

and

and I did wrong not to tell you I had added the 60,000 livres that had been so long standing. But that is no such great crime. I thought I was doing you a piece of service, because you were paying off a debt that would always have been upon your mind. So I hope if there is such an order against me that you will have the goodness to stop it; and I shall be bound to pray for the continuance of your precious life. I am, with the greatest respect, &c.

LETTER LXXIX.

To the SAME.

8th May, 1772.

NO, my poor Ouliff, you have no cause for fear; so far from thinking to have you confined, I told the King how you over-reached me, and he was mightily diverted * with it. So make yourself easy. The Countess DU BARRY.

* Madame Du Barry heard of this trick through Beaujon, the court-banker upon whom the 66,000 livres were drawn. He mentioned to her that her drafts were frequent, and she thinking she had only drawn for 6000 livres, observed that the last was a very trifling sum. He replied that 66,000 livres was no such trifle; this brought on an explanation; she laughed very heartily, and told the King the story by way of diverting him.

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LETTER LXXX.

To the Sieur MONTVALLIER, her Steward.

GO to le Pot the notary. That impudent fellow the day he came to my house with some papers for me to sign, saw the Nuncio and poor Cardinal de la Roche-aymond present each of them a slipper as I stept out of bed. I am informed he makes a story of it about Paris. Tell him to let me hear no more of him, for if I do, I know how to silence him, and to have him chastised as he deserves.

How does my * separation go on? Wait upon the Abbé Terray, and see the Proctor about it. Let it be finished as soon as possible.
I am your's, The Countess DU BARRY,

LETTER LXXXI.

From the SAME.

MADAM,

YOUR separation is finished. You can now make purchases in your own name without any danger. The Marquisate of Genlis in Pi-

* The plea upon which this separation was founded was pleasant enough. In such cases there must be proof that the husband has used the wife ill. As no such proof could be obtained in this case, Count William Du Barry was made to call his wife w—e before witnesses who depos'd to the fact; and this was the ground for a separation.

cardy

cardy is to be sold. It is a very fine estate, and I would have you think of it. If you please I will make a journey there, and give you my best opinion about it. You have not enough money at present for the purchase, but you may raise it in this manner—get the King to purchase the annuity of 100,000 livres, which will produce a million. If this estate does not suit you, you will soon find an opportunity to lay out your money in as good a purchase. I shall wait upon you to-morrow to receive your commands. I am with the greatest respect, &c.

MONTVALLIER.

LETTER LXXXII.

From the Abbé TERRAY.

THE King has signified his commands to me, madam, and I have given orders to the Sieur Certain to pay you the purchase-money of your annuity of 100,000 livres. I have given directions for dispatch to be used in this business, so that your steward may this day receive your million of livres. But as you know my earnest desire to serve you upon every occasion, I intend to manage matters so as you may still receive your annuity of 100,000 livres. You need not doubt but I can perform what I promise, and I beg you to believe me with great devotion to be, &c.

TERRAY.

LETTER LXXXIII.

To the Sieur MONTVALLIER.

WE shall see about making some purchase by-and-by; what I wish most at present, is, that my Pavilion of Lucienne may be put in repair and furnished. See the painters, carvers, and different workmen employed about it. Hasten them, and let le Doux settle their bills. Pay him 100,000 livres, which is the sum I agreed with him for. I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY,

LETTER LXXXIV.

To Count WILLIAM DU BARRY.

YOU are become insupportable with repeatedly asking favours. That I may be rid of your importunity, the King is willing to allow you a pension of 60,000 livres, payable from the duchy of Roquelaure, on condition that you never stir out of that part of the country, that you never set foot again in Paris, nor give me any more trouble. The Abbé Terray will immediately pass the proper warrants.

The COUNTESS DU BARRY.

LETTER LXXXV.

From the Abbé TERRAY.

MADAM,

WHEN I renewed the lease for gunpowder, I demanded a pot of wine of 300,000 livres value as a fine. I intended it for you; and the reason I did not acquaint you of it immediately was, that I hoped at the same I told you of it to present you with that sum in hard gold. I am informed that the farmers, supposing this pot of wine to be an imposition, have applied to the Chancellor to mention it to the King, and I believe it has already reached his Majesty's ears. If the King speaks of it to you, madam, I beg you will justify me. He will see by this, that I neglect no occasion of letting his favours shower down upon you without any detriment to the state. I am always with the greatest respect,
madam, &c.

TERRAY.

LETTER LXXXVI.

To the SAME.

YOU judged rightly, sir, in supposing that the Chancellor would endeavour to injure you with the King. He declared that you intended

to keep the fine of a pot of wine on renewing
the gunpowder leafes. Betwixt ourselves, he
might have reason for what he said; for he ad-
vanced no more than what I have heard from
other parties who had opportunities to be pro-
perly informed. But be that as it will, your
behaviour is too polite to suffer me to scrutinize
too nicely into matters. I have been your friend
upon this occasion, for when his Majesty ex-
pressed his displeasure to me, I smiled, and told
him all he had heard was the effects of envy and
malice; as a proof of which I shewed him your
letter, and made him own you were a man never
at a loss for resources. You are therefore still
in his Majesty's favour. I wish you a good day,
and am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER LXXXVII.

To the Count DU BARRY,

I MUST tell you, sir, that if you were
once in a situation to give me advice, it is my
place now to return it. You take upon you
too much. Every body in Paris cries out shame
upon you, and I am forced to own there is too
much reason for it. In the first place you make
it your public boast that you have received five
millions

millions since I have been at court. Secondly, you have been foolish enough to marry your mistress to a knight of St. Lewis, that she might have rank, and yet you live as publicly with her as before. Thirdly, you caused a great disturbance at the office of the Farmers-General, in endeavouring to make one of your creatures a director. I heard of it from the Farmers-General, who came to complain to me, not only of the riot, but of your boasts concerning it about Paris*. Let me advise you, in order to put a stop to these disagreeable stories, to withdraw yourself for some months to the Marquisate of Lisle, which I have obtained for you from the King, Learn there to bridle your tongue. You may give out for reason of your journey, that you go

* The Count du Barry went to the Committee of Farms to ask for the office of Director at Paris, for the Sieur de Saint, which was vacant by the promotion of the Sieur de la Periere to be one of the Farmers-General. The Committee informed him that he was too late, that the place was already disposed of to the Sieur Chomel, and that it was not possible to dispossess him. The Count insisted upon having the place for his friend, and told them he should not have given himself the trouble of waiting upon them about any common business. Fresh difficulties were started, but the Count grew loud, and asked them, if they did not know that it was he who had the honour of giving the King a mistress; who had made the Duke d'Aiguillon minister for foreign affairs, and M. de Boynes minister for the sea-service; who supported the Chancellor, the Comptroller-General, &c.? Adding, that they ought to treat him in another manner, and not give him cause of offence. This very extraordinary language silenced the Farmers-General, and they did what he required.

96 LETTERS TO AND FROM

to see the estate, which is worth that trouble, for as I am told it has been valued at 100,000 livres. After a time you may return, when I hope all your irregularities will be forgotten. I would have you think that what I advise is out of friendship to you, that the King may not hear of your conduct, and use his authority to drive you from court. I am always with the same attachment, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

To the Abbé TERRAY.

IT is now near a twelvemonth, sir, since you have been in possession of the place of Superintendant of the Royal Buildings; and it does not seem as if you thought of fulfilling the engagements you made, when I obtained that office for you of the King. I do not think any part of my behaviour to you deserves that I should be imposed upon. I am unwilling to believe you capable of it, and you will oblige me, by enabling me, as soon as possible, to settle my opinion of your sincerity. To conclude, sir, as I always act upon principles of truth and good faith, I am the less inclined to put up with a different treatment.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LET-

LETTER LXXXIX.

From the SAME.

MADAM,

I WILL always endeavour to act so that you shall have no just reason to doubt of my good faith. You know that I have always sought with earnestness for every occasion of giving you proofs of an unreserved attachment. I shall never alter my conduct in that respect. You cannot be ignorant, madam, in what bad state of repair all the King's buildings were, when I had the superintendance given me. I imagined that it would be a compleater, and more agreeable gift to the person, whom you designed for this office, if it was given him, when every thing was brought into order. Be assured that it was upon this consideration alone I kept it 'till now, and that I shall not keep it much longer. Permit me now, madam, to remind you, not only of the promise, but of the hope you allowed me to form of M. de Maupeou's office. You have for a long time had cause of complaint against him; you are as nearly interested in his ruin as I am, and if it is easy for you to hasten it, it is equally so for you to engage his Majesty to think of me for his

O

successor;

successor. You may rely upon it, that you can put no person in his place who will have your interest more at heart. I am, &c.

TERRAY.

LETTER XC.

To the Duke de DURAS.

AS a needy courtier, sir, you pay court to me frequently in the most abject manner; as a refined politician you endeavour to rob me of the King's affections, by extolling the beauty of a Madame * Pater, who according to report might have been tolerable twelve or fifteen years ago; and in your office of Gentleman of the Chamber, the scandalous chronicle says, that you not only introduced her to his Majesty, but you even held the candle. I congratulate you upon the occasion; but you are not possessed of all the qualities which the confident of a great prince ought to have; you have not artifice enough to conceal your designs; as a proof of which, I myself, who ought to have been the last that

* This Madame Pater is a Dutchwoman, who about ten years before the occasion of writing this letter, made much noise at Paris. In 1772 she took the title of Baroness of Neukerque, upon what account is not known. This anecdote was as Madame Du Barry has related it, but the intrigue ended there.

should

should discover your plot, was acquainted with it at the very opening. I know further, that my dear friend, the Duke de Choiseul, from his house at Chanteloup directs your schemes, and hopes to reap the benefit of them, as you most certainly will all the disgrace. Go on, sir, and display your talents; but do it with more secrecy. From this day forward I hope never to see you in my apartments. I am, notwithstanding, with all the esteem you deserve, sir, &c.

The Countess Du BARRY.

LETTER XCI.

From GOODY CONSTANT.

My Lady Countess,

I AM Madame Constant, costermonger, tripe-seller, and sausage-maker at Paris. You must remember me, for at the time you lived with my worthy friend poor Lamet, you never missed coming to my house every morning, and many a sallad have we three eat together. Now that you are as fine as Our Lady upon her holy-days, perhaps you may have forgot your old acquaintance Constant. But that is neither here nor there; for my part, I do not write to you to ask favours, for I want none, but it is on account of your poor relations. There is your aunt,

O 2

Madame

Madame Cantini, as good a creature as lives, I would have you to know it, and yet she is as poor as a rat. Before you commenced the fine lady, she followed the business of mending and footing stockings, and got bread for herself and children, but since you are a widow, or whatever you are, you understand well enough what I mean, you forbade her to call herself your aunt, or to follow her trade, and you promised her a pension of 1200 livres, but she only receives half of it, because they say it passes through the hands of Monseigneur the Abbé Terray. And how do you suppose she can live on that, and maintain her children, who are as naked, and have as little education as so many pigs? Upon the word of an honest woman, you may be ashamed of it. And what will it come to, think ye? Why there now; poor Augustus, who is now seventeen; why he, along with another sly little rogue like himself, took a roast fowl out of the window of a cook's shop. He was taken and carried before a magistrate, and if he had not said he was your first cousin, the poor little creature would have lain in prison, and have been whipt, and burnt with an hot iron in the bargain*. Is not this a fine affair

now?

* Madame Du Barry, for fear this cousin should play any fresh pranks, gave orders soon after for putting him in a house of correction,

from

now? And you that are as rich as a Jew do not look upon your relations with bowels of commiseration. Fye, for shame; it is very bad, indeed it is. No good can come of it. How can you expect a blessing if you go on so? For my part, do as you like. I speak for your good. If you take my advice, it is well: If you do not, so much the worse. As for me, I love my neighbours; I can't help it; it is my way; and I write this with tears in my eyes. I am, with great respect, my Lady Countess, your most humble and obedient servant,

CONSTANT.

LETTER XCII.

From the Duke d'Aiguillon.

YOU have actually now at your feet, my dear Countess, the Monarch, the Princes of the blood, the Ministers, and, in a word, the whole court. To maintain yourself in so distinguished a situation, you must apply yourself seriously to displace M. de Maupeou. Proud of the influence he has over the Count de la Marche, and

from whence he was dismissed through the interest of his godfather, and because his board was not regularly paid for. This godfather exploded the behaviour of Madame Du Barry, and at length she thought proper to procure him some post in the Indies, whether he went immediately on being appointed.

of

of that the Count has over the Prince * de Condé, he expects to become Prime Minister, and thinks to govern every thing. It is absolutely necessary to prevent his designs, and I see no other method than by ruining him like the Duke de Choiseul. If this can be brought about by your means, my dear Countess, the Princes of the blood, and France in general must adore you. The Parliament would be then recalled, and must have a great esteem for you, as it would owe you that obligation; in short, you would become the glorious object of general praise, and admiration †. This has been the subject of a conversation I have had this morning with the Duke of Orleans, the Duke de Chartres, and the Prince de Conti. If you can

* The Prince de Condé was returned to Court, and had made his excuses to the King through the intervention of the Count de la Marche. As the Count had always been of the Chancellor's party, the latter supposed the Prince would likewise embrace it.

The Duke of Orleans had made his peace with the King through the means of the Duke d'Aiguillon.

† It seems surprizing that the Duke d'Aiguillon should be so solicitous for the recall of the Parliament, which had discovered an inclination to examine into his affair with the utmost rigour, at the time the King went and put a stop to their proceedings. But the wonder will cease when it is known that M. d'Ormeson, Préfident à Mortier, had, by the Duke of Orleans, engaged, that in case the Parliament should be re-established by d'Aiguillon's means, the court should resume its proceedings against him, and clear him of every charge of malversation. After this promise it became a great object with him to obtain the recall of the Parliament.

any

any day procure from the King an order for the Chancellor's exile, you will the morning after see all the Princes coming to express their acknowledgements. I am with those sentiments you are no stranger to, and which I shall ever bear you, whilst I live my dear Countess, &c.

The Duke d'AIGUILLON.

L E T T E R XCIII.

To the SAME.

I LIKE the Chancellor, my dear Duke, no better than you do; but so much plotting does not please me at all. I should wish that M. de Maupeou was dismissed without my having any thing to do with it. The reason is very plain; the King does not love to hear of it, and whenever I mention it to him, he becomes immediately gloomy, and serious. Now, it is not my interest to give him any disquietude, but on the contrary, to devise ways to amuse him. However, I do not say I shall altogether neglect this business; but I should wish the opportunity presented itself without my seeking it; I would then take advantage of it. You may communicate my sentiments on the matter to the Duke of Orleans. I am entirely yours, my dear Duke.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER XCIV.

To Mademoiselle RAUCOUX; an Actress belonging to the French Comedy,

YOU know, my charming Raucoux, what passed last night betwixt the King, you, and I. Be discreet, and do not abuse the honour I have procured you*. We have both rewarded you, and it shall not be for the last time. I will obtain another interview for you, which will not be displeasing. Adieu, my charming Raucoux, continue to be prudent; it is the only means of insuring you favour, and esteem. Rely upon my friendship.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER XCV.

To the Marchioness de ROZEN.

I BEG your pardon, my charming little Marchioness, for the frolick that was played with you last week in my apartments. It was the King who first thought of it, and I only put

* Mademoiselle Raucoux after having played the character of Dido before the King, was introduced into a closet behind his box, where his Majesty was alone with his mistress. The King gave way to carnal desires with this new object, and she went back loaded with presents both from the monarch and his favourite.

his

his notion into execution*. I hope you will not be angry with me for it, and I wish we may be as good friends as we were before it happened. Believe me, I love you very sincerely, and with these sentiments I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER XCVI.

To the DAUPHINESS.

MADAM,

I AM sorry to be informed that endeavours have been used to hurt me in your good opinion, by representing me as out of humour on account of the diamond poke, which, since you keep it, is, I presume, to your liking †. So far from

* Madame de Rozen, a young lady of great beauty, was upon a footing of strict friendship with Madame du Barry; but the Countess de Provence, to whom she was lady of honour, reproaching her with this connexion, she became of a sudden cool, and distant. Du Barry was sensible of the alteration, and mentioned it with some resentment to the King, who humourously observed, that she was a child, and ought to be whipt. The Countess resolved to understand this reply in its literal meaning, and invited the Marchioness to come next morning to breakfast with her. When she came, she was conducted into a closet, where four waiting-women took hold of her, and actually gave her the discipline the King had mentioned. Rozen complained to his Majesty, but Madame du Barry reminded him that she only acted according to his orders. At length a reconciliation was brought about by the Duke d'Aiguillon.

† The Dauphiness was very angry with Madame du Barry, on account of some unbecoming liberties she took, in speaking of that

from expressing any resentment on that account, I was very sorry that I could not discover you had a fancy to that trifle. I should have been as happy to have anticipated your wishes upon such an occasion, as I shall always be to shew you how desirous I am to be honoured with your esteem. I am, with the most profound respect, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER XCVII.

From the Duke D'AGUILLO.

SOME verses have been lately made, my dear Countess, upon the King, wherein I am represented as being in your good graces. I am at a loss to guess how any suspicions should arise

Princess, and she devised a method of revenge suitable to her age, and the cheerfulness of her disposition.

She knew that Madame du Barry had ordered a very rich diamond poke from a jeweller. Having found out the day when it was to be brought home, she caused a watch to be set, in order to bring the jeweller to her, before he saw Madame du Barry. Her orders were executed, and she gave him directions to make her a diamond poke. In settling the pattern he produced the poke he had with him. This was just what the Dauphiness wished for. Her attendants fixed the poke in her cap; she approved of it, and told him she should keep it. The jeweller is embarrassed; she enquired the cause, he owned it, and she promised to take it upon herself. The Dauphiness then went to the King, and shewed it him; he admired the taste and elegance; she then told how she had over-reached Madame du Barry. The King applauded her device, laughed heartily at it, and went immediately to joke with his mistress upon it.

of our connexion. Have you been sufficiently upon your guard, and is your confidential woman to be relied upon? You know that courtiers can raise proofs out of the slightest suspicion, and you must be sensible of what great consequence this secret is to us both. I should only hope that this is a suspicion arising from malevolence; but it is highly necessary to prevent these verses from reaching the King. The Duke de la Vrilliere has just now imprisoned two persons who were found with copies in their possession, and he has given very strict orders to Monsieur de Sartine to prevent their circulation at Paris. Good night, my dear Countess, believe me whilst I live, yours, &c.

The Duke d'Aiguillon.

LETTER XCVIII.

To the Duke DE CHARTRES.

SIR,

I SPOKE yesterday to the King for the rank of High Admiral for you, and I said every thing I could in your favour. His Majesty asked me if you had the Duke de Penthiere's consent? I replied that I believed you had. The King asked the same question of that Prince, who answered that you had not told him a word

of it, and seemed surprized that you had got me to make such a request to his Majesty. The King was angry with me about it, and I could only say that I had executed my commission as I was instructed. For the future I would have you erect your batteries in a better manner. Pray remember me to papa*. I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY,

LETTER XCIX.

To the Duke d' AIGUILLO.

I WENT to rest last night, my dear Duke, well pleased with the thoughts of acquainting you this morning with the disgrace of the Marquis de Monteynard. The King had at last yielded to my intreaties, and signed the letter de cachet which I presented to him when I had brought him into the humour. His reflexions upon his pillow spoilt the whole scheme, and the first thing he did in the morning when he arose, was to destroy the letter. This event shall teach me a lesson for the future, which is, that when I am fortunate enough to have such another opportunity, I will immediately dispatch the letter, to prevent recalling it. I am greatly

* She called the Duke of Orleans *grapier*.

vexed.

vexed at being thus disappointed; for since I heard what he said to the Abbé * Terray; since his refusal of my † request, and his connexions with the ‡ Chancellor, the man is become more obnoxious to me than ever.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER C.

To the SAME.

IF I have not had the satisfaction, my dear Duke, to rid myself of the Marquis de Monteynard, I have that at least of having the favour granted me you advised me to ask for; and this the King gave his consent to, that I might not be out of humour upon this occasion. I have mentioned to him the heavy contributions levied

* M. de Monteynard having applied to the Abbé Terray for some money for the busines of his department, was told that the Treasury was drained; to which the Marquis replied with some warmth, that he was surprized, when so much money was squandered away on pimps and whores, that none should be reserved for the King's service.

† She had asked him for the regiment of Bau fremont Dragoons for the Sieur Dangets d' Orcay, a nephew of the Farmer-General of that name, which he refused, and gave it to the Prince de Lambesc.

‡ It may seem surprising that the Marquis de Monteynard, who was a man of the most integrity in the ministry, should be so attached to the Chancellor. But he gave for reason, that in matters which he did not understand, he always supported the minister of that department; herein following the maxim of Cardinal Fleury.

by

110 LETTERS TO AND FROM

by Madame de * Langeac, and the persons who have obtained favours through her means. His Majesty was much displeased at it, and has promised that I shall name the proper people to form the establishment of the Count d'Artois. I shall accept of no presents from those to whom I give places, but we shall have the satisfaction to have every one in the household at our devotion. The Chevalier Du Barry shall be Captain of his Swiss-guard. As for the other places, you must think of this matter, my dear Duke, and appoint such as you can depend upon. I shall propose nobody to the King but those who shall be approved of by us both. I shall not see you to-day; the King will hunt, and I shall spend part of the day at the Convent of St. † Elizabeth. Adieu, my dear Duke, you know how much I love you. The Countess DU BARRY.

* Madame de Langeac was well known at Paris. She was married to one Sabathin, a cobler at Marseilles, and came to the metropolis to follow the profession of a woman of pleasure. At length she became the favourite mistress of the Duke de la Vrillière. This minister had several children by her, and being desirous to ennoble them, he clapt the poor cobbler into the Bicêtre, procured a false certificate of his burial, and had his pretended widow married to the Marquis de Langeac, who acknowledged her children as his own.

† Madame Du Barry went to this convent to see her mother, who was placed there at first under the name of Madame de Montrable, and at last she was called Marchioness. Madame Du Barry's behaviour to her mother, was such as does honour to the goodness of her heart; for notwithstanding the King's unbounded passion for her, and the constant dissipation in which she lived, she scarcely ever suffered a fort-

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LETTER CI.

From the Abbé TERRAY.

Paris, 18th April, 1773.

MADAM,

YOUR steward has just now asked me for 60,000 livres by your orders, without mentioning for what purpose that sum was intended to be employed. I told him that I could not then pay him so much, but that I would do myself the honour to consult with you upon the matter. It is far from my inclination, madam, to refuse you any thing, for you cannot be ignorant how much I am at your devotion. Permit me, however, to make a few observations to you, after which you shall direct me as you please. The royal coffers are not so well furnished as you seem to suppose, though I use every means to fill them. I own to you they are at this moment very empty. Since I have been honoured with your protection you have received 18,000,000 livres, without taking notice of a number of trifling sums. The Chancellor draws upon me for a great deal of money to support his parliament, and pay his spies.

night to pass without going to see her; when she commonly dined, and passed a great part of the day with her.

The

The Duke d'Aiguillon drains me for cash to give his creatures, and to remit to his correspondents in foreign courts, where you know he is not upon the best footing. I leave you now to judge, madam, if I have not reason on my side. I am greatly distressed to be obliged to offer these observations, because I have nothing so much at heart as to comply with all you desire. I should even be glad to anticipate your wishes were it in my power. However, if 300,000 livres will answer your purpose, I will pay that sum to your steward whenever he calls upon me for it. I am with respect, &c.

TERRAY.

LETTER CII.

From Mademoiselle DUBOIS, an Actress belonging to the French* Comedy.

Paris, 25th April, 1773.

+ MADAM,

* IN obedience to your commands I had resolved to appear again on the stage, and had endeavoured

* We have never seen the originals either of this letter or of the following; we insert them here, because copies were handed about at court and in Paris, we therefore do not take upon us to answer for their authenticity.

† To understand this letter rightly, the reader must be informed that Madame Du Barry was a great admirer of Mademoiselle Dubois,

endeavoured to improve my small abilities so as to afford you some amusement; but unfortunately for me, my parts were disposed of, and my theatrical friends have made me sensible what confusion it would create amongst them. I have been informed that the Gentlemen of the Chamber have undertaken to lay before you a memorial, stating the actual impossibility of my appearance. I hope, madam, that paper will satisfy you with respect to the zeal with which I have strove to contribute to your pleasure in those precious moments, which you are able to spare from those important concerns you are engaged in.

But, madam, your condescension has emboldened me to make you a request. Allow me to lay open my whole heart to you. Your own is too susceptible of the impressions of love not to participate with mine. For more than twelve years I have loved Dauberval, and happy should I have been if his passion had been as constant as mine! The faithless creature has made the same protestations to others which he has done to me. I have still a dear pledge of our union,

to whom she had made many presents, and whom she was desirous to see again upon the stage. Dubois consented to make a new appearance, but circumstances not permitting, she took occasion of this negotiation to apply to the Countess to write to Dauberval, a dancer at the Opera, and her quondam lover to engage him to marry her.

Q

a child,

a child, the object of my maternal fondness. It grieves me when I think of the illegitimacy of its birth, and I wish to remove it by marriage. I am at this time in easy circumstances; I am willing to pay off my perfidious lover's debts, and I ask no more than his hand in return. So noble an action, madam, is worthy of yourself; though I have led an irregular life, my principles are uncorrupted. You are sensible that a young creature possessed of charms, is exposed on the stage to the affiduities of the young and amiable amongst the nobility belonging to court. How is she to withstand such temptation! Yet I was never happy amidst the gaieties of the theatre; I always entertained a respect for religion; my conscience was timorous, and soon took the alarm; the dread of hereafter pursued me unceasingly into the very recesses of pleasure; the loss of my last lover threw me into a deep melancholy; his fatal end in the very prime of life made me tremble for myself. These, madam, were the chief motives that made me quit the stage; you wished me to appear again, and I got the better of my scruples. Circumstances oppose your partiality; condescend, madam, to compleat the happiness I feel to find you sometimes think of me, by granting me your protection, or rather by using your authority, which can never be better employed. I am
persuaded

persuaded that Dauberval cannot refuse the obligations he is under to me when they come recommended by you; and I shall reap this consolation from my marriage, that as I cannot amuse your respectable leisure at the theatre myself, I shall do it by proxy—by another self---by a husband who will always be at your devotion, as long as he is so happy as to please you. I am, with the most profound respect, &c.

DUBOIS.

LETTER CIII.

From DAUBERVAL, a Dancer at the Opera.

MADAM,

I AM not so great an adept in love-matters as Mademoiselle Dubois may be; for if it consists in taking a lover to bed with her, it is certain she is better acquainted with them than I am. As I was not always able to supply her with love, and as it was absolutely necessary she should be supplied with it, she gave up my place to others, and we relieved each other in our turn, four, five, and sometimes more of us. The consequence was that she produced a little boy. She was kind enough to call me his father, and I was the more grateful for the favour, as I knew she might have chosen him one out

of the Court, the Law, the Church, or the Finances. However, I accepted the honour, and I consented to take care of the child; but the mother, looking upon it as a play-thing expressly made by the hand of Providence for her amusement, kept it herself. I then told her that I should disclaim all title to it. Now that she is tired of it, she would lay it at my door. But since she has kept it so long, she must even keep it longer, and to do so is acting consistently with her maternal tenderness, and her regard for religion. I know the weakness of her head, and I should be afraid of being infected with the same disorder. She fears the devil; and so do I; this it is that hinders me from marrying her; for as the evil spirit is sometimes incarnate, and enters into father, mother, sister, lover, what would become of me when her husband!

You permitted me to express my sentiments freely upon this point, madam, and I have done so. I wish my sincerity may divert you for a moment. I imagine this was your whole design in the negociation, which can be of very little consequence amongst the weighty matters that call for your attention. It, however, discovers in a striking manner that amiableness of disposition which appears in all you do. It is certainly a great misfortune for Mademoiselle Du-bois that she is no longer able to afford you any

amusement; but I have no occasion to marry her to prove to you how much I am at your devotion. I would have the merit of it all my own.

As to Mademoiselle Raucoux, whom you had the goodness to offer to my choice, in case I refused Mademoiselle Dubois, she is at present but newly come to market, and as her price is not yet fixed, I do not wish to be the first to cheapen her. When her value is better known, it will be soon seen who will be the purchaser. I am with profound respect, &c.

DAUBERVAL,

LETTER CIV.

From the Duke D' AIGUILLO.

YOU know, my lovely Countess, the many causes of complaint we have against your brother-in-law. He has just now been guilty of a great piece of imprudence, which makes me out of all patience with him. You shall judge of it yourself, and I hope you will assist me to keep him within bounds. Since his return from Lisle, he shut himself up at his house at Triel for several days, and was the whole time engaged in very deep play. Besides his ready money, he has lost seven thousand louis d'ors upon honour,
for

for which, according to custom, he has given an order upon the Abbé Terray. The Abbé, as we had pre-concerted, refused his order. When your brother heard of it, he flew into the most violent passion, threw out a number of invectives against us all, and declared he had made ministers, and could un-make them; in a word, to shew his great moderation to the company, he said he had only yet had five millions out of the royal treasure. What hurts me the most, is, that the person who told me this, assures me, this discourse was had at a supper, where several people were present, who will take pleasure in spreading the story abroad. You see, my dear Countess, what harm his indiscretion may do us; especially by discovering how easily money is obtained from the royal coffers; a circumstance that will not fail to be exaggerated to the encrease of our enemies. I speak my sentiments freely, because I know for a long time you have been weary of his persecutions. He is indeed a very dangerous man, and I hope you will assist me to remove him. His character is such, that he will not fail of taking some wrong step, and thereby give us a just pretence for doing it even by force, if we cannot bring it about by fair means. Adieu, my charming Countess, you know how dear you are to me.

The Duke d'Aiguillon.

LETTER CV.

To the SAME,

Fontainebleau, 21st October, 1773.

I AM, my dear Duke, in the greatest distress; you know the King was taken ill the day before yesterday. He made la Martiniere sleep in his bed chamber; I know not what past betwixt them, but his Majesty has been ever since remarkably cold to me. I am afraid that physician has caused him to make some reflexions, the consequences of which alarm me very much. As soon as you have a moment to spare, come to me; I shall be alone all the evening; it is highly necessary we should consult together how I am to behave. I am intirely yours,

The Countess Du BARRY.

LETTER CVI.

From the Duke of ORLEANS.

I WAIT with impatience, my charming Countess, to learn the result of the solicitation which you promised me to use with the King, to engage his consent to my marriage with Madame de Monteson. The great interest you appeared to take in this affair, and your great credit

dit with the King, had led me to hope I might be certain, that it would speedily be brought to an happy issue. It was, you know, only with this prospect, that you determined me to return to court. Since that time things are just as they were; it is certain, my dear madam, you have not done all in your power. Yet I cannot think that a pair of such sweet lips as yours are, should ever utter a promise with intention to break it. Such a conduct is inconsistent with that amiable freedom you always have used with me; and I can see no reason why I should be the only person you should treat with insincerity. I am, &c.

Louis P. Duke of Orleans.

LETTER CVII.

To the SAME.

October 25th, 1773.

SIR,

NOTWITHSTANDING the great credit which you suppose I have with the King, it is not so easy for me to prevail on him to do things for which he has a dislike. I must tell you plainly this marriage is one of those, and I am sorry for it. Hitherto my solicitations have availed nothing. One lucky minute would make

make you happy. But, say you, when will that minute come? that is more than I can tell you. But come*, papa, shall I give you some good advice? Marry; and we will see to bring matters about; I am strongly interested to do it. If the King does not now give his consent to the marriage, he may be brought to do it in the end, which will be the same thing. Be assured that I shall never desert your interests, and that I shall lose no opportunity of obliging you. I am, &c.

The COUNTESS DU BARRY.

LETTER CVIII.

To the Duke d'AIGUILLO.

I WRITE to you, my dear Duke, overwhelmed as I am with the lamentations of the Duke de la Vrilliere, and Madame Langeac. But it is all over with them; the Chevalier d'Arcq will sell no more favours for some time. The letter de cachet is signed for banishing him to Tulle, where I am inclined to think he will

* This is a familiar way of addressing the first prince of the blood, but it will not appear extraordinary when the reader is informed that Madame du Barry used still greater freedom with the King himself. One day that his Majesty amused himself with pouring out the coffee in her apartments, he happened to spill it, when she cried, "Hold France, have a care, you play the devil with the coffee."

not find it an easy matter to display his talents.
I reckon upon the promise you made to go with
me to-morrow to Paris. I am your friend,

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER CIX.

To the SAME,

YOU judged perfectly right, my dear Duke,
Viscount du Barry's marriage is come to nothing;
my tears and intreaties would not avail. The
King appeared more determined than I could
ever have thought him capable of being. The
Marquis de la Tour du Pin la Chorce it is that
robs us of Mademoiselle de St. André. We
must now think seriously of Mademoiselle de
Tournon*. She is said to be extremely hand-
some, and some are inclined to fear she may be-
come my rival; but no matter; should it prove
so, I shall at least have the satisfaction to think
that the post does not go out of the family. I
am intirely yours,

The Countess DU BARRY.

LET-

* Mademoiselle de St. André was a natural daughter of Lewis XV. The King had resolved to marry her to the Viscount du Barry, but suffered himself to be dissuaded from it; and she was married to the Marquis mentioned in the letter.

LETTER CX.

From the Prince DE SOUBISE.

THE interview was had yesterday, at my house, my charming Countess. Viscount du Barry is mightily taken with my fair kinswoman, who on her part, consents to be directed by me. The Prince de Condé has no dislike to the match, but before he gives his consent in form, he desires the King would admit him into his council; that he would buy his house; and that he would give him 1,500,000 livres to pay off his debts. He thinks you will easily obtain these favours for him of his Majesty. For my part I wish much you may do it, because I am desirous to have a conclusion made of this alliance, with which I think myself much honoured. I know we might in some sort dispense with the Prince's approbation, but it would make a very great difference as to the general satisfaction. If, on the other hand, the Prince de Condé obtains

Mademoiselle de Tournon was the daughter of a person of condition in Normandy; she was seventeen years of age, very handsome, and allied to the best families of the court; but she was not rich. She was a near relation of the Prince de Soubise, who was mean enough to propose this match. The Prince de Condé, as son-in-law of the Prince de Soubise, interfered in the negociation, and made some considerable demands upon the occasion; part of which being granted him, the match took place.

his desires through your means, it could not but be advantageous to you, as you would thereby lay him under great obligations. I am, my charming Countess, &c.

The Prince DE SOUBISE.

LETTER CXI.

From the Duke D'AIGUILLO.

I HAVE, my dear Countess, many observations to make, upon what you told me yesterday. Though you received, with a great deal of mirth, the apprehensions which I entertained of the consequences of the match in question, yet I think they deserve, on your part, to be well weighed. I am afraid, that whilst you give yourself this trouble to bring it to a conclusion, you are at the same time working your own ruin. Do you not think it likely that this may be the end they propose, whilst they solicit you to make a point of this affair? Your brother-in-law* is capable of doing such a thing, and perhaps he may not be the only one. Think of this, my dear Countess. Mademoiselle de Tournon is handsome, and the King may take a fan-

* Viscount du Barry, of whose marriage mention is made in this letter, is the son of Count John, with whom Madame du Barry lived.

cy to her; the Prince de Condé from his rank and alliance with her, will have great influence over her; and you know enough already of the Count Du Barry to fear he will gain an ascendancy over his daughter-in-law, which he may employ to work your ruin, or at least to keep you more than ever in subjection of him. If in spite of these reflexions you persist in running the risk of the event, it would by all means be necessary to keep the Prince de Condé out of the council. Besides that it would increase the advantages he gains by this match, we should be no longer masters of the deliberations there: his power would be such as could not be opposed, and he would be at the head of the administration of the affairs of the whole kingdom. Not to create any disgust, persuade his Majesty not flatly to deny, but to give him hopes, that this favour may be granted him after the marriage is solemnized, without fixing any precise time, or making any absolute promise. As to the payment of his debts, and the purchase of his house, you may easily obtain these two favours; they will please him, and they are of no consequence to you. Adieu, my fair Countess; remember I only state to you the consequences of the two resolutions you are to take, without advising you to the one or the other; so that whatever happens I am not to be blamed

blamed for it. I am, with the same friendship
I have ever borne you, your, &c.

The Duke d' ARGUILLON.

LETTER CXII.

To the Prince de SOUBISE.

SIR,

I HAVE been fortunate enough to succeed in getting the King to purchase the Prince de Condé's house, and to grant him 1,500,000 livres which he has occasion for to pay off his debts. I wish I had been as successful in procuring his admission to the council; but his Majesty said he would consider after the marriage what was to be done; so he has neither granted this favour, nor absolutely refused it. This, sir, is the result of my strongest solicitations; if the Prince resolves not to approve of the match, unless upon the express condition of his being admitted to the council, there must be an end to that, and the favours already obtained; and we must seek out an alliance for the Viscount, which may be brought about with less difficulty. My chief regret will be, that I have not been able to conclude a matter which you had so much at heart; but I did my part towards it, and you cannot blame me for it. I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LET.

LETTER CXIII.

From the Prince de CONDE.

MADAM,

I NEVER presumed to make any conditions for the marriage of Viscount Du Barry, but I conceived that as he was to marry a relation of mine, I might upon such an occasion solicit your interest for favours, which I should receive with the greater pleasure as I should owe all the obligation of them to you. Accept, madam, my thanks for the two favours which the King has granted me at your * request. As to the third, I should hope you will not lose sight of it, but continue your good offices in that respect. I should wish to have a conference with you on that subject. I beg to know the day and hour, when I may have the honour of waiting upon † you. I am &c.

L. de B. Prince de CONDE.

* The Prince de Condé, a very ambitious man, had really the design which the Duke d' Aiguillon had suspected him to have, and which is mentioned in the Duke's last letter to Madame Du Barry, but the Prince, fearing to fail altogether, gives way, as appears by this letter.

† The Prince observed this ceremony of asking Madame Du Barry to name her time upon his first visit, but omitted it at his second; upon which she made him wait a considerable time before she received him. She was in reality offended, that he had made his peace through the mediation of the Count de la Marche, who ruled the Chancellor; and the Prince by his repeated submissions seemed to invite her to redouble her insolence towards him.

LET-

128 LETTERS TO AND FROM
LETTER CXIV.

To the Duke d'Aiguillon.

IT is with much concern, my dear Duke, I acquaint you that my reconciliation with the Royal Family will not take place as I had flattered myself*. I can lay no blame on Madame de Narbonne, who has acquitted herself of her negociation to my satisfaction. She prevailed upon Madame Adelaide; as soon as she was gained over, there was no difficulty to bring her sister into it; and we were lucky enough to succeed likewise with the Countess de Provence, and even the Dauphiness. But the Dauphin overset the whole scheme, and seemed so much averse to it, that we lost all hopes of accomplishing our design. You know I am to present the young Viscountess; I must take her to the Dauphin; I dread the moment, and wish I could get fairly rid of the busines. Pray, how is the Dutches? was she blooded this morning? Tell me about it to-morrow. I expect you to dinner according to promise. I embrace you with all my heart.

The Countess Du BARRY.

* Madame Du Barry, as appears by some former letters, was not liked either by the Dauphin, the Dauphiness, or the Princesses. To engage Madame de Narbonne to treat for an accommodation, she was promised a Dukedom for her husband, besides a considerable pecuniary gratification.

LETTER CXV.

To the SAME.

WELL, did I not say, my dear Duke, that I had great reason to dread this business of presenting? You cannot imagine how rudely that great ill-bred * boy behaved. When we were ushered to his apartment, he was looking, or pretended to be looking through the window, and after we were announced, continued in the same posture, and never cast one look towards us whilst we staid. My niece was sensibly affected at this behaviour, but the King made her ample amends by his very gracious reception of her. He seemed so pleased with her, that I was alarmed at it; but I did not shew my concern for fear of displeasing his Majesty; for should I appear out of humour, it may increase his liking, which in all probability will be soon over. I am not very sure that nothing serious has passed betwixt them; but I shall seem to know nothing of it, and depend, my dear Duke, upon your keeping it a secret. You know how necessary it is in order to support my credit. I am happy to hear the Dutches is so well recovered. Tell her I love her as well as you do.

The Countess DU BARRY.

* The Dauphin.

LETTER CXVI.

To the SAME.

I HAVE this moment learnt, my dear Duke, that my husband has had a quarrel with the Parliament of Thoulouse, upon the subject of an insurrection, in which it is said he wanted to take an active part*. I am not thoroughly informed of the fact; endeavour to make yourself master of it, and pray do what is necessary upon this occasion. We drove him from hence that his folly might not disgrace us, and must he still give us trouble at such a distance! I wish you a good evening.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER CXVII.

From M. de BOYNES, Minister for Naval Affairs.

MADAM,

THE displeasure which the King shewed yesterday, has been cause of the greatest uneasi-

* Count William, then at Thoulouse, was desirous to distinguish himself at the time of the insurrections on account of the dearness of bread. One day that the tumult was at the highest, he harangued the insurgents, made use of the King's name, and proposed to capitulate with them. The Parliament was displeased, and some members were for prosecuting him; but that measure was over-ruled, and they contented themselves with sending a memorial of the whole affair to the court, and there it ended.

ness to me. What I did, was by order of the Duke of Orleans, and he it was took me to your apartment when the affair happened which you know of*. Allow me to hope, madam, you will have the goodness to prevail upon his Majesty to honour me with his favour as heretofore. I trust I have merited it by the zeal I have always shewn for his service. That which I have on all occasions discovered for you, gives me room to hope you will use your good offices on this occasion. My gratitude shall equal the profound respect with which I am, &c.

BOURGEOIS DE BOYNES.

* The Duke of Orleans had ordered M. de Boynes to draw up a memorial for restoring the Parliament, which of course would have been followed with the exile of M. de Maupeou, whose place De Boynes wished for. He was the properst person the Duke could have chosen for such a purpose, because he assisted the Chancellor in the destruction of that court. As soon as the memorial was finished, they went with great privacy to Madame du Barry's apartments, and proposed to her to solicit the King to execute a project, which, as they said, would please every one. The favourite tapping the Duke on the shoulder, said to him with her usual familiar term, "Papa, you know I never "interfere in matters of government." The Duke continued his intreaties, and almost threw himself at her feet. She consented at length to hear the memorial read. The King came in whilst this was doing, and the Duke of Orleans snatching the memorial out of the minister's hand, put it into his pocket. His Majesty observing his mistress change countenance, infisted on knowing what was the matter, and she told him all that had past; whereupon the King said to the Duke of Orleans, thus, "Cousin, if you wish that we should continue friends "have nothing to do with this negociation;" then, addressing himself to the minister—"and as for you, M. de Boynes, I am surprized "to find you here; this is no place for you, so be gone;" "as for you "madam, (turning round to the Countess) I am obliged to you for "your reluctance to enter into this plot." M. de Boynes wrote this letter to deprecate the King's anger on this occasion,

132 LETTERS TO AND FROM
LETTER CXVIII.

From the Duke of ORLEANS.

I AM well persuaded, madam, that if our last interview had not been interrupted, so far from saying you would not interfere in the case of the Parliament, you would have been the first to become their protectress, and to have laid their justification, and the wishes of all France for their restoration, at the feet of the throne. The plan I mean to propose to you, is such as must satisfy every one, and displease nobody. One man alone would be a loser by this reconciliation, and this man is as much an enemy to you as he is to the state *. I have much to say, which I cannot commit to paper, you will therefore oblige me by naming a day and hour, when I may wait upon you with M. de Boynes, to talk over this matter for a few minutes. I am persuaded that after this interview you will not only adopt my sentiments, but you will lend me your assistance to remove his Majesty's prejudices. There may come a time, madam, when you may thank me, for having afforded you an opportunity of contributing to a revolution so much desired by all good citizens. Their acknowledgements cannot but be pleasing to you, as well as useful, as must the support of those tribunals, which will owe their re-establishment to you, I am, &c.

L. P. Duke of Orleans,

* The Chancellor.

LETTER CXIX.

To the SAME.

SIR,

YOU know how much I dislike to meddle in matters of the kind you mention in your letter. I doubt much whether you will be able to persuade me to undertake the business so heartily as you seem to think. But as I would be far from disobliging you, I will expect you to-morrow at six o'clock. You see I can refuse your highness nothing. I hope you will give me credit for my compliance. I am, &c.

The Countess Du BARRY.

LETTER CXX.]

To the SAME.

SIR,

WHAT has happened must undoubtedly have given you no favourable opinion of my good faith, and you perhaps imagine my behaviour on that occasion was concerted with the King. If my anxiousness to reconcile you with his Majesty has not removed your doubts, a simple relation of the matter as it happened will certainly do it,

Through

Through the carelessness of one of my women, your letter was very improperly given to me before the King. When I saw it came from you, I was putting it by to read at another opportunity, but his Majesty insisted upon seeing it. He was exceedingly angry when he read it, and at first commanded me to refuse you the interview you asked; but having considered a long time, he said, "you shall appoint the Duke of Orleans to come to you to-morrow, and I will be present at the time, but concealed in a place where I can overhear all. Tell him not a word of my design, and send him an answer immediately." I was under the necessity of obeying his commands; the King even dictated the letter, and of course he laid the trap in which you were * taken. It was out of my power to make his Majesty alter his design. I hope this will make no breach in our friendship, and that my good papa will not be angry with me. I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

* The King, after having overheard all the Duke of Orleans had to say, discovered himself, and expressed his indignation, threatening to disgrace him if he persisted to go on with this matter. The Duke replied, that certainly it would be a great misfortune to him to be disgraced, but that he should bear it with fortitude, since it was in defence of the public good, which he could never think of abandoning. Fortunately Madame Du Barry was able to reconcile them both before they parted.

LET-

LETTER CXXI.

From the COUNT DU BARRY.

I HAD hopes, my dear sister, that upon the marriage of my son with Mademoiselle de Tournon, you would have procured for me the ten thousand louis-d'ors I asked for; you know the twenty thousand livres which were granted me were only to discharge play-debts, and were but just sufficient for the purpose. But I expect as much at least upon the marriage of the Chevalier with Mademoiselle de * Fumel, if it should take place, of which at present I have my doubts. The young lady does not seem very agreeable to the match, notwithstanding the many favours she may expect to receive from the King. The family is unwilling that the Chevalier should bear the arms of Fumel as was agreed upon: In short, these people seem to start difficulties on purpose to gain time, and overset the affair. As it is of consequence to us, engage the King, who has already interfered in the matter, to hasten a conclusion; one word from him will remove every † difficulty. I am, my dear sister, intirely your's,

The Count DU BARRY.

* The Chevalier was another brother of the Count Du Barry.

† Accordingly the King interested himself in the matter. He gave the Chevalier Du Barry 500,000 livres in order to clear an estate of

136 LETTERS TO AND FROM
LETTER CXXII.

To Count WILLIAM DU BARRY.

THE fine story you have told us has much the air of invention, and seems contrived to excuse your return hither after your protestations, and the injunctions laid upon you to the * contrary. If I consent to pardon this step, it is upon this condition only, that you are never heard of more; otherwise you will force me to have no mercy on you.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER CXXIII.

From M. de VOLTAIRE.

MADAM,

MONSIEUR de la Borde informed me that you had ordered him to kiss me on both cheeks as from yourself.

60,000 livres a year, which the young lady's father gave as a portion, from all incumbrances. The bridegroom had besides the reversion of the government of Chateau-Trompette which M. de Fumel enjoyed. The Chevalier afterwards took the title of Marquis Du Barry.

* He had excused his coming by a story he had fabricated. He said he had received a threatening letter, in which he was enjoined to deposit 50,000 livres in a place pointed out in it; to which paying no regard he received another, and had quitted Thoulouse to avoid the consequences.

Quoit

Quoi! deux baisers sur la fin de ma vie!
 Quel passeport vous daignez m'envoyer.
 Deux, c'en est trop! Adorable Egerie;
 Je serois mort de plaisir au premier.

Two kisses at the end of life!
 Such was divine Ægeria's * will;
 What passport from this vale of strife!
 One were alone too much to kill.

He shewed me your picture: Pray, madam, be
 not angry; I took the liberty of paying it back
 the two kisses.

Vous ne pouvez empêcher cet hommage,
 Foible tribut de quiconque a des yeux.
 C'est aux mortels d'adorer votre image,
 L'original étoit fait pour les Dieux.

This tribute, tho' poor, 'tis not yours to prevent
 From all who that portrait shall view;
 For mortals to worship the copy was lent,
 But gods the original claim as their due.

I have heard some part of M. de la Borde's
 Pandora. It seems to me worthy of your pro-

* The nymph Ægeria inspired Numa, the great Roman law-giver. By a stretch of flattery M. de Voltaire would insinuate that Madame Du Barry had likewise inspired the King in the operations he had just then made in legislation.

tection*. The favours you confer on genius are the only means to increase the splendour of your name.

Accept, madam, the unfeigned respects of a poor solitary old man, whose heart feels no sentiments more than those of gratitude.

LETTER CXXIV.

To the S A M E.

NOTHING, sir, can be more polite, and agreeable than the letter which I have just received under your hand. I judged that the commission I gave M. de la Borde would have procured me the flattering acknowledgement you have sent me. I would have it put as a supplement to the Apotheosis of King Petau †. These two pieces joined together will justify you in the eyes of the public, and of posterity from the charge generally made against you, *that you are partial, and apt to contradict yourself.*
I am, &c. The Countess DU BARRY.

The Countess Du BARRY.

* M. de la Borde, the King's valet de chambre, mentioned in this letter, had composed musick for M. de Voltaire's opera of Pandora; the poet, always eager to have his pieces produced on the stage, advises Madame du Barry to have it performed under her patronage.

† At the first rise of Madame du Barry, Voltaire wrote a piece in verse under this title, in which he made mention of the monarch and his favourite in the most satirical and indecent terms. The bard must needs be very much mortified, after that, to receive such a tart reply to a letter dictated by the most servile flattery.

LET-

LETTER CXXV.

To the Chancellor MAUPEOU.

I AM very much surprized, Mr. Chancellor, that Zemoro's* commission has not past the seal, as it was in your office yesterday. Is this negligence a proof of the zeal you pretend to have for the King's service? I should have thought you would have been more forward to pay court to your master. I expect, sir, this business will be finished to-day, as otherwise I shall complain of it to the King. I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

* This Zemoro was a negro-boy for whom Madame du Barry had conceived a great liking. The familiarities which her excessive fondness encouraged him to take, gave room to malicious people to report that he was employed to other purposes than lacquies usually are. The King, to please his mistress, would sometimes condescend to amuse himself with this negro, and the favourite took an opportunity to ask some mark of royal favour for him. "Let him be appointed (said the King) housekeeper of Lucienne, with a salary of 600 livres." The King signed the commission immediately, and Madame du Barry was much diverted to think that the Chancellor was obliged to put the seal to it. She accordingly took occasion of some delay in this business to show the ill will she bore him,

LETTER CXXVI.

To the Duke d' Aiguillon.

The Marquis de Monteynard* is now dismissed in good earnest, my dear Duke. The letter de cachet is signed, and he must have received it by this time; so that our fears of its being cancelled are all over. You are satisfied, and I am well pleased to have been able to carry a point which you had so much at heart. There remains now only the Chancellor to get rid of; but that will be a more difficult business. The King is so happy that he is no longer teized by gownsmen, that he is more attached than I could wish him to the man who relieved him from their remonstrances. Consider of some plan, my dear Duke, that I should follow to make his Majesty change his mind, and I will pursue it exactly. But before we think of any thing else, we must attend to a matter of importance that admits of no delay. The office of minister of the war-department must be filled up, and that you must have, and I shall employ

* It was thought extraordinary that this minister kept his place so long. "He must fall," (said the King one day) "for there is nobody supports him but me."

The Duke d'Aiguillon was immediately appointed to succeed him.
every

every means to procure it for you. In the mean time I embrace you, and am intirely yours.

The Countess DU BARRY,

LETTER CXXVII.

From the SAME.

I SEE, my dear Countess, it is to no purpose persisting to persuade the King to remove the Chancellor. We shall never succeed that way; we must pursue another in order to gain our point. Pretend, by degrees, to come into the King's way of thinking; but insinuate at times that his Majesty will never reap all the advantages which might be derived from M. de Maupeou's operations, so long as he continues in office. You may give for reason, what is apparent enough, that the Princes, the Peers, and the people, hold him in great abhorrence. For my part, I shall second you on all occasions. I shall watch all his motions, and doubt not soon to lay some snare for him which shall furnish us with power* to crush him. I am, &c.

The Duke D'AIGUILLON.

LET-

* The Abbé Terray was in the plot for removing the Chancellor. Till the proper occasion arrived of ruining him, he deprived him insensibly of all his creatures. He had already obtained an arrêt of council for suppressing the office of Inspector of the Demesnes, which

LETTER CXXVIII.

To M. DE BOYNES.

YOU will oblige me, sir, if you will pay attention to the request which the bearer of this, Monsieur d'Abbadie* has to make you. You have

had been given to le Brun, the Chancellor's secretary and confident. The hatred which Maupeou bore the two ministers was so apparent, that nobody doubted of the misunderstanding that subsisted betwixt them. The Chancellor endeavoured to throw all the odium of the revolution he had brought about upon them. When he was applied to for the recall or liberty of any one, he affected to pity the party's misfortune, and insinuated that he had advised the calling in of the letters de cachet; that all that had happened must be laid to the charge of the Abbé Terray, *who would rob on the highway to bring in money to the treasury*; and of the Duke d'Aiguillon, *that tyrant, who would murder every body, and squander all the money he could come at.* Seeing it was impossible to be well with these ministers and the favourite, he endeavoured to make his peace with the royal family. For that purpose it was necessary to put on the appearance of probity, and sometimes act with honesty. He performed his part well, though in a character different from his real one; and he carried his hypocrisy so far as to pass for a religious man, in order to get access to Madame Louisa. In a word, he declaimed so much against the meanness of all those who paid court to a woman without either birth, or modesty; and employed so many intrigues, that he set the King's children more than ever against the favourite, and her dependants. Things were carried so high, that the King, affected by their flighting behaviour, cried out, in an agony of grief, "I see very well my children have lost all regard for "me."

* The Sieur d'Abbadie was a Commissary of the Navy, who had never been at sea, but took it in his head to use the credit of Madame du Barry to obtain favours, as many others had done before him. Accordingly he went to Paris, and found means to present a parrot which

have given the cross of St. Lewis to two of his colleagues, he wishes to obtain the same favour, and I should be glad you would grant it him on my recommendation. I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER CXXIX.

From the Duke D' AIGUILLOU.

I AM at a loss, my dear Countess, to guess the reasons which have engaged you to espouse the interests of the Prince de Condé so warmly. However, since you desire it, I shall not be against the King appointing him grand master of artillery, and I shall even second your recommendation to his Majesty if you think it necessary: Yet, I confess, I am of opinion you will not succeed in this business, because I know the same favour is solicited for the Count de Provence*. I am, &c.

The Duke D'AIGUILLOU.

LET-

he brought with him to her. The bird was a fine one, and she thought it worth a cross of St. Lewis; the readiness with which this minister granted the favour, shews what subjection he was under to her.

* The Duke was no more willing than the Marquis de Monteynard that the artillery should be divided from his office; but he had more art than his predecessor; and that he might not give the prince or the favourite cause of complaint against him, he had engaged the

LETTER CXXX.

From M. DORAT.

MADAM,

IT is with much concern I learn that certain verses are attributed to me, which I now take the first opportunity to disavow. I am credibly informed that a poem, intitled, *Epitre à Margot*, is come to your hands, and that I have been very maliciously represented to you as the author* of it. It certainly merits your indignation, Madam; but if from my rank in the republic of letters, I have any title to your protection, I would beg you to take every step towards discovering the real author; in which case you will be revenged, and I shall be justified. I am, &c.

DORAT.

Count de Provence to ask for the place; and this he did, because he judged that the King would be unwilling to disoblige either, and therefore would suffer the place to continue dormant: and herein he guessed right, the artillery remained with his department, and neither the prince, nor Madame du Barry could fix any blame upon him.

* M. Dorat was certainly author of the piece here mentioned; he feared the Bastile, and denied it in this manner, which does him less credit than the original poem.

LET-

LETTER CXXXI.

From the Chevalier DE MORANDE, at London.

MADAM,

AS I live in a country where men have not given up the faculty of thinking for themselves ; which faculty they are at liberty to exercise, without the least risk in what manner they judge best, I can with confidence avow myself the author of a small work intitled, *le Gazettier cui-rassé*. If this work, which I make no doubt has reached your hands, has afforded you the least amusement, I shall applaud myself for being the author of it; your approbation must be esteemed its greatest praise. I am just now going to print another work, intitled, *Memoires secrets d'une femme publique, ou Essais sur les avantures de Madame la Comtesse du Barry, depuis son berceau jusqu'au lit d'honneur.* [Secret memoirs of a woman of pleasure; or an Essay on the adventures of the Countess du Barry, from her cradle to the bed of honour.] I do suppose, madam, If I had not added the second part of the title, you would easily have discovered by the first whom I meant. I thought it however but right to communicate my design to you before I put it into execution; because, as you have on many occasions shewn a peculiar taste for arts, and sciences, you

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might wish to be the sole possessor of a manuscript which I have endeavoured to render interesting to the public, and which may appear to you of great value. If you think so, it will not cost you above 50,000 livres. Though this price may seem high, it is yet very moderate. You would scarcely believe, madam, what expence I have been at to procure the necessary materials. The anecdotes of the latter part of your life have been purchased at an immense price. I have bought with hard gold the particulars of your amusements with his most christian majesty, and of the methods you used to deceive his spies, when you consoled yourself for his Majesty's deficiencies with your good friend the Duke d'Aiguillon; and when he failed, with little Zemoro, with whom you tried all that Aretin has taught, and even outdid that ingenious Italian. In short, madam, you may be assured that this work is very compleat, and that it is furnished with every thing that can insure it a rapid sale. If you wish to make purchase of it, I will deliver the manuscript to the person who shall pay me the sum before-mentioned: but if you do not mean to buy it, you will allow me at least, madam, to send it into the world under your auspices: I shall be then sure of its meeting with a favourable reception from that public whose property you once were. I flatter myself that you will

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at least allow me this last favour, in consideration of the desire I have to immortalize your fame, and the scrupulous exactness with which I have conformed to the strict line of truth. I am with the greatest respect, &c.

The Chevalier de MORANDE.

LETTER CXXXII.

To the Duke d'AIGUILLO.

I HAVE just now received, my Lord Duke, a most abominable letter from London. You will judge yourself of it; I send it you herewith. Lose not an instant to employ every possible means to prevent the publication of this execrable libel, with which we are threatened. You are as nearly concerned as I am. Besides what the author has set forth in the letter, I am persuaded, if he has the least suspicion of your connexion with the Viscountess du Barry, he will not fail to mention it as an article not the least interesting of your life. I am, &c.

The COUNTESS DU BARRY.

LETTER CXXXIII.

From the SAME.

I HAVE discoursed with the English Ambassador, my dear Countess, about writing to

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his

his court on the subject of Morande; but he told me it was to no purpose, for the King would not suffer any infringement on the rights of the English nation. He moreover well observed, that this man resembled a cur that was half-starved, and nothing would so soon stop his barking as to throw him a bone. However, I have determined upon taking a different method, and I have just dispatched a man with some assistants from the police, who I hope will answer the purpose. I wish they may succeed*. My dear Countess, I think since our last explanation you have nothing to reproach me with. Be persuaded that what you call assiduities, with regard to the young Viscountess, are nothing more than civilities which I owe to the rank she bears, to

* When these people arrived at London, they contracted an intimacy with Morande, and endeavoured to secure him, and carry him over to France; but he suspected their design without letting them perceive it; borrowed thirty guineas of each of them; and having made their intention public, they were glad to leave the kingdom as fast as they could.

The Duke then sent another person, who offered 40,000 livres, which were not accepted.

At last M. Caron de Beaumarchais was charged with the negociation, and succeeded. He gave Morande 50,000 livres down, and the grant of a pension of two hundred pounds sterling during his life from the crown of France, guaranteed by Sir Joshua Vanneck, of London, half of which is to revert to his wife if she should happen to be the longest liver.

By this means the publication of this work was prevented, and it is said not to have been intirely printed off.

the alliance she has made, and to the favour with which she is honoured by the King. I am always, &c.

The Duke D'AIGUILLON.

LETTER CXXXIV.

From M. DE BEAUMONT, Archbishop of Paris.

15th January, 1774.

MADAM,

IT is the duty of my function to instruct those who are committed to my charge, and to employ every means, which charity directed by prudence may suggest to guide them into the paths of truth, when they have been led astray. You cannot suppose, Madam, I am the only one unacquainted with a scandal which unfortunately is but too notoriously public. If the errors of a private person afflict me, how great must my concern be, when I think of those into which you lead a Prince in other respects to be admired for his very eminent qualities! Your triumph is undoubtedly in the eyes of the world very flattering; and I will allow there are few endowed with virtue sufficient to withstand it, or possessed of so much resolution as to be enabled of their own accord to renounce it. May I hope, Madam, that so sublime an effort is not superior

to

to your strength? If your regard for the King was sincere, would you not give him the most striking proof of it by conducting him in the way of salvation, and encouraging him to continue in it by your own example? Could you look upon a voluntary retirement as an humiliating exile, when such retirement would be the means of reconciling you with heaven, and of making you partaker of the purest pleasures which can be tasted here below—peace within yourself, and esteem with all good people? For to these you would have the justest title, since you would be the means of restoring to the state its King, and to religion, a christian and protector. As dissipated as may be the giddy circle within which you move, I cannot believe, Madam, that every spark of religion is extinguished within your breast: Condescend but to hearken for a moment to the monitor within you, and I have no doubt but the prayers I make will be of avail, which are, that I may propose as a pattern to his people that King, who cannot doubt of my respect, and attachment to his person. I am, &c.

CH. DE BEAUMONT.

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LETTER CXXXV.

To the SAME.

SIR,

I SEE with pleasure your attachment to the King, but notwithstanding all you say, I believe my own as real. It is true I shew it in a different manner, perhaps, a more persuasive one. I could never have supposed you would have applied to me to work the change you so much desire. Your zeal would without doubt merit great praise were there nothing worldly in it; but I am far from thinking you disinterested, because I am well informed of your project of marrying the King with an Archduchess, and I know if this alliance succeeds through your means, you are sure to reap great advantages from it. If I have not courage sufficient to forward your pious designs, I must own, Sir, your letter has made a very strong impression on me, notwithstanding what some persons have said to whom I have shewn it. To restore my conscience drooping with alarms, and to persuade me I was not so criminal as I feared I was, they would have had me believe that the most serious of my crimes would have been but venial sins, if I had the advantage which you, Sir,
have

have experienced to be directed by one of those sublime theologists *, who could teach you to sin in so charming a manner with Madame de Moiran, that your apostolical soul was nowise defiled by the pollutions of the body. In a word, Sir, though I could not comprehend all they said, I understood enough to discover that there was an entrance into the way of salvation, much easier come at, and better suited to my weakness than that you pointed out to me. If it is really so, you will oblige me much to make me acquainted with it, and you shall then see how earnestly I will set about the work of reformation. I am, with respect, &c. †

The Countess DU BARRY.

* The Jesuits.

† The persons to whom Madame Du Barry says she communicated the Archbishop's letter, were doubtless they who furnished the materials for this answer. We are well convinced that nothing criminal ever passed betwixt the Archbishop and Madame de Moiran, who was matron of the hospital of Salpetrière. It is true the world was malicious enough to report otherwise; but if there had been any truth in the story, it was then of so long standing that it ought to have been buried in oblivion. The Archbishop's letter certainly did not merit the sharp reply he received; accordingly, we have heard the good man was much affected at it.

LET-

LETTER CXXXVI.

From the Chancellor DE MAUPEOU.

Paris, 1st February, 1774.

MADAM,

THOUGH I have always entertained the greatest respect for you, and have the most perfect regard and attachment to you; though so far from undermining your interest, I have on all occasions been eager to prevent your wishes, yet some persons have been able to injure me in your esteem, and make me considered by you as a dangerous enemy; in order to prevail with you to engage the King to withdraw the confidence which he honours me with. I know it, Madam, but too well, but I do not mean to cast any blame upon you, because you have been deceived; but what gives me great uneasiness, is, to see that you have placed your confidence in persons who are unworthy of it. The Duke d'Aiguillon who owes every thing to you is betraying you; and is striving to supersede you by the Baroness de Neukerque*. To make her quite firm in her situation, he has a design to

* This is the Baroness de Neukerque of whom mention is made in Letter XC. In order that she might marry the King, the Duke de Duras in conjunction with the Duke d'Aiguillon had obtained a divorce for her.

marry her privately to the King. Informed of this plot, and imagining you would not believe him capable of such base treachery without the most convincing proofs, I strove with great diligence to procure you such ; accordingly I have been fortunate enough to succeed. The letter from the Duke d'Aiguillon which is inclosed, will inform you of more than will be agreeable. I wish, madam, you may find friends more faithful, I am, &c.

DE MAUPEOU.

Letter from the Duke d'Aiguillon to the Baroness de Neukerque, which came inclosed in the foregoing.

YOU permit me, madam, to give you advice ; you even solicit it from me. Flattered with the confidence you repose in me, I prepare to comply with your desire with all the sincerity in my power.

The situation of a mistress to the King is undoubtedly very brilliant ; but desirable as it appears, believe me, madam, it is not without its mortifications, and is ever more or less exposed to fatal reverses of fortune. I am persuaded that honoured as you are with the King's favour, it would be full as easy for you to remove every difficulty in the way of a private marriage as simply

simply to supplant the present favourite. Suppose every difficulty doubled ; the difference of the two situations is so great, that it does not require a moment's consideration to determine which to choose. Consider then of a plan to bring this about, and pursue it steadily. I am sorry you had so much complaisance in your private interview yesterday with the King. Enjoyment easily obtained must cool the greatest heat of passion in a prince, whose desires are already so much damp'd by frequently gratifying them. To fix his natural inconstancy, it is necessary to excite warmth by resistance, conducted however with so much art, as not entirely to extinguish it. I look upon him to be in the situation of those worn-out debauchees, who in the latter part of life take a religious turn ; whose consciences are easily alarmed ; and whose doubts and inquietudes have sometimes need of a confidant to remove them. You may, madam, improve this hint to advantage. Model your conscience by his ; affect to have the same fears ; the same scruples ; this is an infallible means to succeed in your design. I shall see you to-morrow at five o'clock. Before I go to you I shall be with the King ; perhaps you may make the subject of our conversation. If so, you may rest assured I shall do you no harm.

LETTER CXXXVII.

To the Duke d'AIGUILLO.

AND is it to you, sir, I am to make the bitterest reproaches! To you, whom I have rescued out of the hands of the executioner! To you; whose passion I had the weakness to listen to! To you; whom I have loaded with riches and honours! To you; who ought to kiss the print of my footsteps! You have had the baseness to deceive me; you have yourself presented a woman in order to supplant me. I know it; I have the proof of it under your own hand; yet I am scarce able to give credit to such vile perfidy. The monster that loads me with calumny at London, is a deity compared to you—Despair and fury seize me—I burn with revenge—yet my mind is so disturbed at this moment I know not how to compass it. In the excess of my rage I resolve to fly to the King—to confess your crime and my own—to shew him your letter to the Baronefs de Neukerque—and to intreat him to punish us both. I will pursue you to hell itself, and if there are furies there that punish ingratitude, I will deliver you over to their vengeance—in a word, whatever an in-

jured woman is capable of doing, that will I do *.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER CXXXVIII.

To the Abbé DE BEAUVAIS, at that time Canon of Noyon, and Preacher to the King, now Bishop of Senez.

Holy Thursday at Night, 1774.

SIR,

YOU have preached a very insolent discourse to day. In the room of using charity and moderation in your sermon, you had the audacity to reflect upon his Majesty's way of life in the very face of his people; you made your attack upon him only, though you ought to have used gentleness towards him, and have excused his frailties to his subjects. I do not think you were moved by a spirit of christian charity, but excited by a lust of ambition, and a fondness for grandeur; these were the motives of your con-

* The Duke fearing the consequences of Madame Du Barry's passion, flew immediately to her, threw himself at her feet, confessed his guilt, which indeed was not to be denied; made the best apology he could, and was fortunate enough to appease her, though offended in so outrageous a manner: He obtained his pardon on promise of abandoning the Barones, and to have nothing more to say to her; and in this he was as good as his word.

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duct. Was I in his Majesty's place, you should be banished to some obscure village, and there taught to be more cautious, and not to endeavour to raise the people to rebel against the rulers God has put over them. I cannot say what the King may do, but you have presumed too much upon his goodness. You did not expect from me a lesson for your conduct, drawn from the christian doctrine and morality, but I would advise you for your own good to pay attention to it*. I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

* The Abbé De Beauvais was of an obscure original, and during his situation at court had resolved to push his fortune, and either get a bishoprick, or be locked up in the Bastile. For this purpose he took a most extraordinary method. He had the courage to exclaim from the pulpit against the scandalous life of Lewis XV. He characterized his passion for Madame Du Barry in a strong representation of the manners of King Solomon, the application of which was very obvious. " This monarch (said he) satiated with pleasure, and having experienced every kind of lubricity, which the court could furnish to quicken debilitated appetite, fought out a new species amongst the vile refuse of public prostitution."

Madame Du Barry knew her own likeness too well not to be offended at this bold caricature, and wrote the foregoing letter the same evening to the preacher. She moved the King to punish him, but he was of too mild a disposition to be offended with him, and contented himself with observing that he had done no more than fulfil his vocation.

Another story is told of the same preacher, that one day after he had been holding forth very vehemently against those debauchees who amidst the chillness of age endeavour to stir up the embers of concupiscence, the King turned about to Marshal De Richeieu, and said; " Richelieu, I think this man has thrown a great many

" stones

LETTER CXXXIX.

From DAUBERVAL, a Dancer at the Opera.

Paris, 10th April, 1774.

MADAM*,

HOW shall I express my acknowledgments for the great favour you have done me! Already a liberal partaker of your bounty, I have just experienced a singular instance of goodness of which there is no example in France of the kind bestowed on a mere man of talents. I was overwhelmed with debt; that misconduct so common with people of my class; the dissipated course of life we lead; the expence we are drawn into by the gay company we frequent; the deep play which is now become so universal; all contributed to throw my affairs into disorder. This,

"stones into your garden."—“Yes, Sire, replied the Marshal, he “threw them with so much force that I thought a good many fell “in the Park of Versailles.”

The Abbé obtained his ends; the bishoprick of Senec became vacant, and he was appointed to it.

* Dauberval, a ruined man, had threatened his creditors and the public with going to Russia. Madame Du Barry resolved not to lose so useful a man, sent for him, and asked how much he wanted to settle his affairs; he answered 50,000 livres. She drew out a proportion which every courtier should pay according to her opinion of his abilities, and she made the collection herself. No one paid less than five louis d'ors, and some were taxed at ten, fifteen, up to five-and-twenty. By this means the sum was soon raised, and Dauberval's admirers had the consolation of keeping him at home.

however,

however, afforded me no claim upon the indulgence of the public; so that, pestered as I was by creditors, I had no means to satisfy, I had resolved to quit my native country and go to Russia, whither I had been invited, where the climate, severe as it is, would have appeared to me more mild than that I quitted. You, madam, were unwilling that a foreign country should enrich itself by a loss, which though in itself inconsiderable, you condescended to think of consequence. You were pleased to say that it would have been a national reproach if so valuable a dancer was suffered to leave the kingdom for 50,000 livres. These were your words, and I should blush at repeating them, if one could be at all modest when honoured with your suffrage. But what would turn a head far less giddy than mine, is, the readiness with which you undertook to engage the Court to restore my ruined fortunes. Certainly it was in your power alone to have rescued me from my distress; it would have been no more than a small stream taken out of a plentiful river; and it would have been more agreeable to me to have had but one benefactress. But what do I say? I have in reality only one; for it is to you alone I am indebted for the benefactions of so many illustrious personages. You observed that as they were all my admirers, they should
all

all help to save me. You opened a subscription, and you received the subscribers according as they discovered a readiness to pay their proportions; it was a tax you imposed upon all who came to pay their respects to you. The Marchioness de Pompadour, that charming woman who preceded you in that high station you now fill, whom the arts have immortalized because she encouraged and protected them, instituted a Lottery for Géliotte, a singer at the Opera; balls were given for Granval, a veteran actor belonging to the French Comedy; Molé, a performer at the same theatre, has had his benefit-play; these were all three men great in their professions, and far superior to me. It was reserved for you, madam, to consider the loss of me as a public one, and, in order to keep me at home, to have recourse to one of those uncommon taxes which the lovers of their country strove who should be first to pay. The only way by which I can shew my gratitude, is to devote myself more than ever to your amusement. I leave it to men of letters, and artists to celebrate your praise in a suitable manner; for what may not genius expect from a patroness who has done so much for a man whose only recommendation was, his good fortune to have a talent to contribute to her pleasures! Already have Painting, Sculpture, and Engraving disputed

the glory of transmitting to admiring Europe the enchanting graces of your person; already have the Muses crowned you with their chaplets; already has the great High Priest of Letters, the prince of poets and philosophers, the venerable old man of Ferney, fallen prostrate at your feet, and in his own person presented you with the offerings of Parnassus, and the school of Plato! May his example encourage others who have hitherto observed a respectful silence! May a general chorus of praise be raised up! And may the sceptre of Arts and Philosophy fallen from the hands of the Marchioness so much admired, and still so much lamented, be placed in yours, and may you be to them another Minerva! I am, with the most profound respect, &c.

DAUBERVAL.

LETTER CXL.

From the Duke de NIVERNOIS.

Paris, 12th April, 1774.

MADAM,

I COULD not refuse you when you asked me for twenty-five louis-d'ors as my proportion to the subscription you had opened for Dauberval; I cannot, however, help telling you that I had lain by that small sum with intention to give it to a gentleman in distress, a disbanded officer, who

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who has a family, and has been several years soliciting a small pension. As you deprived him of this small assistance, it is but right, madam, that you should make him amends. I send his memorial inclosed, and I make no doubt but his case will excite your compassion, and that your humanity, of which you have given so many proofs, will engage you to exert yourself in his favour, and procure him what he so much wishes *. I am, &c.

The Duke de NIVERNOIS.

LETTER CXLI.

To the Marchioness de MONTRABLE.

I CANNOT, my dear mother, go to see you to-morrow according to my promise. The King's present situation does not permit me to leave him. Since the deaths of the Marquis de Chauvelin and Marshal d' Armentieres, he is fallen into a melancholy which gives me great uneasiness. This has been increased by that cursed sermon which the Abbé Beauvais preached before him, and for which it was not my fault

* Madame Du Barry feeling the force of a request of this nature urged upon such an occasion, very cheerfully undertook the business; and this gentleman, who, but for the ingenuity of his patron, might have continued to solicit to no purpose, returned to his family, carrying with him much joy, and a small competence.

he did not meet the punishment his insolence deserved. I have just proposed a journey to Trianon*. I shall do every thing I can think of to restore the King to his of peace mind and usual gaiety. I shall see you, my dear mother, as soon as I can. You know what pleasure I have in giving you fresh assurances of my regard for you.

The Countess DU BARRY.

LETTER CXLII.

To the SAME.

THE King, my dear mother, has taken the small-pox. I did all I could to prevail with him to stay at Trianon; but la Martiniere taking advantage of his weak state, made him determine to go to Versailles. I never stir from his bed's foot. He does not appear to be in a dangerous way, but at his time of life every thing is to be feared in such a disorder. I have had the good luck to prevail with him to try Bordeu, my physician, and he and le Monnier

* It was this unfortunate journey to Trianon that occasioned the King's death. He saw the daughter of a carpenter there who pleased him much, and Madame Du Barry thought this a fair occasion to remove his melancholy. By dint of threats and large promises, the young girl was prevailed on to yield herself to the Monarch's desires. She was the next day seized with the small-pox in a most violent degree, and on the third day died; the King caught her disorder, and sickered immediately after.

chiefly attend him. They were for administering the sacraments; it was for my interest it should not be so, and Bordeu opposed it; he had the good luck to succeed by observing that the ceremony very often did sick persons a great deal of harm. Adieu, my dear mother, I send this letter away and return to the King. I am, &c.

The Countess Du BARRY.

PH

LETTER CXLIII. MVSEVM

To the SAME.

BRITANNICVM

THE blow is struck, my dear mother. The King finding himself grow worse desired the Duchess d'Aiguillon to take me with her. In consequence of which we are at Ruelle, from whence I now write. His Majesty before he received the viaticum declared by the mouth of the High-Almoner, that he was sorry for the scandal he had given his subjects, but that his life from henceforth should be dedicated to the maintenance of religion and the happiness of his people. The promises of a man who thinks himself dying ought not to give concern; they are broken as soon as health returns. If the King should get over it, I make no doubt of being

being on the same footing as before. Adieu,
my dear mother, I am, &c.

The Countess DU BARRY.

P. S. Just as I was sending away this letter
I am informed that the King is better.

LETTER the Last.

To the SAME.

I BEGIN to have a bad opinion, my dear mother, of the King's distemper. I had visits yesterday during the whole day ; this day I have had but two. What is more ; I have sent to the Abbé Terray for 300,000 livres, and he has refused my order. If the King gets over it, I will make him repent his impertinence—I hear a coach coming ; I must see who it is.

Ah, my dear mother, it is all over with us ! —The King is no more—It was that scoundrel Duke de la Vrilliere who brought me the news, at the same time that he delivered me a Letter de cachet ordering me to go to Pont aux Dames near Meaux to the convent there. I treated him with great contempt. This insolent man whom I could yesterday have trampled under my feet, seems to day to triumph in my disgrace. I am sick at the thoughts of the retreat

to

to which I am condemned, and more so at the manner in which I am to live there. I am allowed but one woman; I am forbid to see anybody, and I can receive no letter but what the governess of the convent examines. I have sent for my steward, and shall give him orders which he will acquaint you with. I beg you will see that he obeys them, and that I am robbed as little as can be helpt. I shall write to you if I am able as soon as I reach my prison. Adieu, my dear mother, I have so much to do, and am so much agitated in mind, that I fear I shall leave many things undone *.

The Countess Du BARRY.

* This Letter de cachet was like a thunderbolt to Madame Du Barry; "What, cried she with her usual force of expression, is this "blessed reign to begin with a Letter de cachet?" She loaded the Duke De la Vrilliere with the bitterest reproaches for having undertaken this errand, and treated him with the highest disdain. The Letter de cachet, however, was not severe; she was in the secrets of government, and it was prudent to prevent so volatile a woman from discovering them. The King expressed in the letter, that reasons of state obliged him to order her to go into a convent; that he knew how highly she had been respected by his grandfather; and that immediate care was taken to render her retirement as agreeable as possible, and to make her a decent provision if there should be occasion.]

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